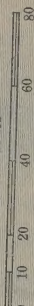


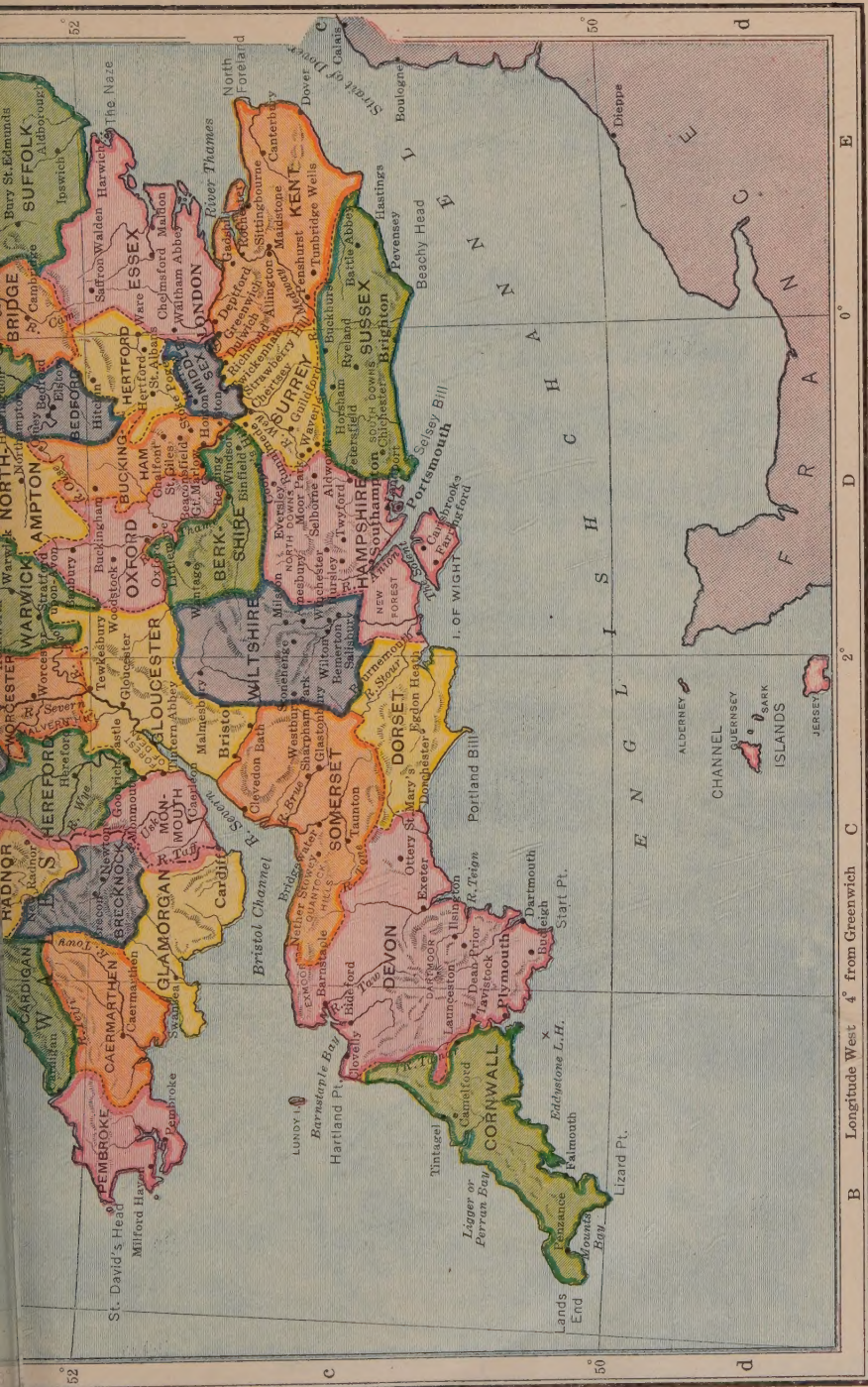
Map showing places connected with
ENGLISH LITERARY HISTORY
 An Index to this map is printed at the end of the book.

Scale of Miles



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO., PUBLISHERS





B Longitude West 4° from Greenwich C

D 0° E

2°

C

B

C

D

BRITISH POETRY AND PROSE

A Book of Readings *Part Two—Wordsworth to Yeats*

EDITED BY

PAUL ROBERT LIEDER

Professor of English Language and Literature in Smith College

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

Professor of English in the University of Chicago

ROBERT KILBURN ROOT

Professor of English in Princeton University



LIBRARY
GENERAL MOTORS
INSTITUTE

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON • NEW YORK • CHICAGO • DALLAS • SAN FRANCISCO

notes
not cat

COPYRIGHT, 1928

BY PAUL ROBERT LIEDER, ROBERT MORSS LOVETT, AND ROBERT KILBURN ROOT

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The selections reprinted in this collection are used
by permission of and special arrangement with
the proprietors of their respective copyrights

The Riverside Press

CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

PREFACE

IN compiling this book the editors have recognized, first, that literature is a fine art; second, that literature has had an historical development both in its forms and in its material, corresponding to changing social conditions and intellectual interests and attitudes; and, third, that it is an expression of the personalities in whom its creative force was incarnate. Accordingly, literature may be approached from three points of view, not, of course, to be sharply separated — the æsthetic, the historical and social, and the personal. From the first point of view the effort has been made to select the most excellent examples of literary genius from *Beowulf* to the close of the nineteenth century. Arranged in chronological order, these will, it is believed, enable the student to gain for himself a consecutive view of the development of literature in accordance with the tastes, interests, and needs of changing generations. As a matter of convenience the conventional division into periods has been adopted, with the warning that these are not to be emphasized as hard-and-fast distinctions. The introductory notes to the several periods are intended to point out general characteristics of their literary production as affected by political and social movements. The introductions to individual authors have been prepared with the aim of *identifying* the writer, of giving a succinct account of his experience in life as a key to his work, and of suggesting the qualities of his mind and art. As it is hoped that the student will draw in his mind an outline of the historical development of English literature, so it is hoped that he will see and enjoy for himself the qualities which make its exponents memorable. The editors have tried to refrain from forcing opinions and conclusions, and in general to avoid doing for the student what he can reasonably be expected to do for himself.

With these principles in mind they have undertaken to select the most characteristic work of each writer, whether it is generally familiar, or comparatively unknown. They have sought to give due representation to the various types and forms of literature, and to illustrate their progress from period to period. For those who wish to approach the field from this point of view rather than the historical, a special introduction to the study of literature according to types has been provided. The editors have not hesitated to include in the volume selections which may be regarded as important primarily as expressive of the intellectual or social characteristics of a period or school. And they have been especially hospitable to work having the interest of autobiography and personal revelation.

In particular the editors have tried to limit the inclusion of fragmentary extracts, however striking or elegant or famous as purple patches, in the belief that for appreciation of a writer's point of view, form, and style, the unit in which he wrote should be considered. Particularly is this study of literature as units necessary in the case of works significant as historical documents. Thus, for example,

both *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Milton's *Areopagitica* have been presented in their entirety. Where space forbade such presentation, complete books, cantos or chapters, or other integral portions of the work have been chosen — e.g., the first book of the *Faërie Queene*, the first two books of *Paradise Lost*, the first voyage of *Gulliver's Travels*, the three chapters of *Sartor Resartus* which give the most vital portion of Carlyle's spiritual biography and creed. Omissions have been made only where the substance became clearly unnecessary, or unsuitable, such as the last third of Ruskin's chapter on the *Nature of Gothic*, which is too technical for reading without diagrams. Occasionally the editors have reduced to its fundamental elements a work too important to be omitted and too long to be reproduced in its entirety, such as Mill's tractate *On Liberty*, and Macaulay's *Essay on Bacon*.

This effort to present units has forced the editors to omit frankly and entirely the two forms of novel and drama. They believe that the study of a novelist's work in selections is of limited value, and that while several fine plays might be presented in completeness to give acquaintance with the dramatic form, the number would be inadequate to give a conception of the history and development of the form. And for both novel and drama there are editions easily accessible to be used as supplementary reading. For the editors are far from claiming anything like completeness or finality for their list of selections. They hope rather that their work may be a basis for widely intelligent choice and reading in accordance with the student's own interests and tastes and in addition to any formal academic requirement. In the description of types, references are given to the drama of the Elizabethan period and the novel of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which the reader cannot fail to follow with greater understanding and interest through his general acquaintance with the characteristics of their periods as revealed in this book.

The editors have kept in mind the fact that the purpose of literature is to be read, not studied. They have therefore endeavored to reduce the apparatus for study to a minimum. They have sought to include in the introductions to periods, writers, and works such preliminary information as may be necessary to general understanding; and for details they have limited explanatory footnotes to a minimum. Absolute consistency in procedure in this matter is both impossible and undesirable. On the whole, the editors have attempted to give such explanations as are indispensable to an immediate understanding of the passage while leaving to the reader the pursuit of allusions which can be traced in generally accessible reference books, histories, encyclopædias, or classical and biographical dictionaries. Quotations and references to literature have not, in general, been referred to their sources, except when they were obviously intended to be read in connection with the work itself, as, for example, Macaulay's references in his *Essay on Milton*. In such cases usually the author's own notes are sufficient, and these have, wherever practicable, been retained.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the following publishers and individuals for permission to reprint copyright material:

To Ginn and Company for Professor Chauncey B. Tinker's translations from Old English prose.

To Harper and Brothers for selections from the works of Algernon Charles Swinburne.

To Rudyard Kipling and his agents, A. P. Watt and Son, for poems from *Rudyard Kipling's Verse, Inclusive Edition*, published by Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., copyright, 1892, 1893, 1899, by Rudyard Kipling.

To Longmans, Green and Company for poems by William Morris from *Earthly Paradise and Collected Works*.

To The Macmillan Company for poems by Thomas Hardy, John Masfield, and W. B. Yeats.

To Macmillan and Company, London, for selections from Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

To the Princeton University Press for Professor J. D. Spaeth's translation of Old English poems.

To Charles Scribner's Sons for essays by Robert Louis Stevenson, for poems by George Meredith, and for the use of Professor Osgood's abridgment of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

CONTENTS

MAP SHOWING PLACES CONNECTED WITH ENGLISH LITERARY HISTORY

Frontispiece

A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF TYPES OF LITERATURE xiii

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION	683	Character of the Happy Warrior ...	708
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH		Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Child- hood	710
Lines Written in Early Spring	685	The World is Too Much with us..	712
Expostulation and Reply	686	Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle	713
The Tables Turned.....	686	Laodamia	714
Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey	687	Composed upon an Evening of Ex- traordinary Splendor and Beauty.	717
Lucy.....	688	Mutability	718
Lucy Gray	690	Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge	718
The Simplon Pass.....	690	The Trosachs	718
Michael.....	691	Preface to <i>Lyrical Ballads</i>	718
The Prelude:		SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE	
From <i>Book First</i> : Introduction— Childhood and School-time....	697	'Kubla Khan, or, A Vision in a Dream	730
From <i>Book Ninth</i> : Residence in France	697	The Rime of the Ancient Mariner ...	731
From <i>Book Eleventh</i> : France (<i>con- cluded</i>)	699	Frost at Midnight	739
My Heart Leaps Up.....	699	Christabel	740
To the Cuckoo	700	Dejection: An Ode	747
Resolution and Independence.....	700	Youth and Age	749
Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802.....	702	Work without Hope	749
Composed by the Seaside near Calais, August, 1802.....	702	Biographia Literaria: Chapters X, XIV, XVII, XVIII	749
It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free.....	702	SIR WALTER SCOTT	
On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic	702	Lochinvar: From <i>Marmion</i> , Canto V, Lady Heron's Song.....	766
To Toussaint L'Ouverture	703	Prologue to <i>The Lady of the Lake</i> ...	767
Near Dover, September, 1802	703	Soldier, Rest! Thy Warfare O'er: From <i>The Lady of the Lake</i> , Canto I	768
Written in London, 1802	703	Boat Song: From <i>The Lady of the Lake</i> , Canto II	768
London, 1802	703	Coronach: From <i>The Lady of the Lake</i> , Canto III	769
To the Daisy	703	Brignall Banks: From <i>Rokeby</i>	769
When I have Borne in Memory ...	704	Jock of Hazeldean	770
At the Grave of Burns	704	Pibroch of Donald Dhu	770
The Solitary Reaper	705	Clarion: From <i>Old Mortality</i>	770
She was a Phantom of Delight	705	Lullaby of an Infant Chief	770
I wandered Lonely as a Cloud	706	Proud Maisie: From <i>The Heart of Midlothian</i>	771
Elegiac Stanzas	706		
Ode to Duty	707		
To a Skylark	708		

County Guy: From <i>Quentin Durward</i>	771	Ode	841
Bonny Dundee	771	Ode on a Grecian Urn	841
Here's a Health to King Charles: From <i>Woodstock</i>	772	Ode to a Nightingale	842
GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON		Ode on Melancholy	843
When we Two Parted	774	To Autumn	843
She Walks in Beauty	774	La Belle Dame Sans Merci	844
The Destruction of Sennacherib	774	Two Sonnets on Fame	844
Stanzas for Music	775	To Sleep	845
From <i>Childe Harold's Pilgrimage</i> . Canto the Third	775	Sonnet: To a Young Lady who Sent me a Laurel Crown	845
Sonnet on Chillon	793	Lamia	845
The Prisoner of Chillon	793	Sonnet	854
To Thomas Moore	797	WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR	
So we'll go no more a Roving	797	Rose Aylmer	855
To Thomas Moore	797	A Fiesolan Idyl	855
Mazeppa	797	On his Seventy-Fifth Birthday	856
From <i>Don Juan</i> . Canto the Third stanza 85-end	805	Imaginary Conversations	
Stanzas	810	Marcellus and Hannibal	856
On this Day I Complete my Thirty- Sixth Year	810	Leofric and Godiva	857
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY		Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn	860
Hymn to Intellectual Beauty	812	Bossuet and the Duchess de Fon- tanges	862
Ozymandias	813	The Empress Catharine and Prin- cess Dashkof	866
Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples	813	THOMAS HOOD	
Ode to the West Wind	814	The Bridge of Sighs	869
The Indian Serenade	815	The Song of the Shirt	870
- Prometheus Unbound: End of the Last Act	815	The Death Bed	871
The Cloud	816	Morning Meditations	871
To a Skylark	817	CHARLES LAMB	
To Night	819	Essays of Elia	
Time	819	Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago	872
Mutability	819	Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist	878
Adonais	819	Imperfect Sympathies	882
The Final Chorus from Hellas	828	Dream Children: A Reverie	885
To —	830	A Dissertation upon Roast Pig	887
Lines: When the Lamp is Shattered	830	In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers	891
A Dirge	831	Poor Relations	894
JOHN KEATS		A Character of the Late Elia	897
Sonnet	832	WILLIAM HAZLITT	
To my Brothers	832	My First Acquaintance with Poets	900
From <i>Endymion</i> . Proem to Book I.	832	On Going a Journey	909
Robin Hood	833	The Fight	914
Stanzas	833	A Farewell to Essay-Writing	922
Lines on the Mermaid Tavern	834	THOMAS DE QUINCEY	
Fancy	834	Suspiria de Profundis: Levana and our Ladies of Sorrow	927
The Eve of St. Agnes	835	The English Mail Coach	930

THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION	945	Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister ..	1099
THOMAS CARLYLE		The Lost Leader	1100
Sartor Resartus — Book II, Chap- ters VII, VIII, IX; Book III, Chap- ter VIII	948	Meeting at Night	1100
Past and Present — Book III, Chap- ters XII, XIII; Book IV, Chapter I ..	965	Parting at Morning	1101
JOHN STUART MILL		Home-Thoughts from Abroad	1101
On Liberty	981	The Bishop Orders his Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church	1101
THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY		Love among the Ruins	1103
Milton	1002	Up at a Villa — Down in the City .	1104
Francis Bacon	1026	A Toccata of Galuppi's	1105
JOHN HENRY NEWMAN		One Way of Love	1106
From <i>Apologia Pro Vita Sua</i>	1039	Respectability	1106
The Idea of a University — Dis- course V. Liberal Knowledge its Own End	1044	The Guardian-Angel	1107
ALFRED TENNYSON		Memorabilia	1107
The Poet	1054	The Last Ride Together	1108
The Lady of Shalott	1055	A Grammarian's Funeral	1109
Enone	1057	The Statue and the Bust	1110
The Palace of Art	1060	"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came"	1114
The Lotos-Eaters	1064	Fra Lippo Lippi	1117
The Epic	1066	Andrea del Sarto	1122
Morte D'Arthur	1067	Prospice	1125
Ulysses	1071	Epilogue	1126
Locksley Hall	1071	JOHN RUSKIN	
Break, Break, Break	1076	The Stones of Venice. Vol. II, Chapter VI	1127
Songs from <i>The Princess</i>	1076	Unto this Last. Essay I	1152
From <i>In Memoriam</i>	1078	Fors Clavigera. Letter V	1159
Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington	1084	MATTHEW ARNOLD	
The Charge of the Light Brigade .	1087	Quiet Work	1166
Lyrics from <i>Maud</i>	1088	Shakespeare	1166
Milton	1090	The Forsaken Merman	1167
Northern Farmer, Old Style	1090	Empedocles on Etna	
The Higher Pantheism	1092	Empedocles' Song. Act I, Sc. 2. .	1168
The Revenge	1092	Self-Dependence	1172
Rizpah	1094	Morality	1173
Crossing the Bar	1096	The Buried Life	1173
ROBERT BROWNING		Lines written in Kensington Gar- dens	1174
Pippa's Song	1097	The Future	1175
Cavalier Tunes:		Requiescat	1176
Marching Along	1097	The Scholar-Gipsy	1176
Give a Rouse	1097	Isolation	1180
Boot and Saddle	1098	Dover Beach	1181
My Last Duchess	1098	Rugby Chapel	1181
		Preface to Essays in Criticism, First Series	1183
		The Function of Criticism at the Present Time	1185

Sweetness and Light	1198	A Superscription	1262
Essay on Wordsworth	1206	The One Hope	1263
THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY		The Cloud Confines	1263
Autobiography	1215	WILLIAM MORRIS	
On the Advisableness of Improving Natural Knowledge	1220	The Defence of Guenevere	1264
A Liberal Education; and where to Find It	1227	The Eve of Crecy	1269
On the Physical Basis of Life	1230	The Haystack in the Floods	1269
ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH		An Apology: Prologue to The Earthly Paradise	1271
Say Not the Struggle Nought Avail- eth	1239	L'Envoi to The Earthly Paradise	1272
From <i>Dipsychus</i>	1239	ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE	
Qua Cursum Ventus	1240	Choruses from <i>Atalanta in Calydon</i>	1274
The Latest Decalogue	1240	Hymn to Proserpine	1275
Hope Evermore and Believe	1240	A Match	1277
Qui Laborat, Orat	1241	A Ballad of Burdens	1277
Ite Domum Saturæ, Venit Hesperus	1241	The Garden of Proserpine	1279
Life is Struggle	1242	Hertha	1280
In a London Square	1242	To Walt Whitman in America	1282
All is Well	1242	A Ballad of François Villon	1284
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING		On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot	1284
Sonnets from the Portuguese. Nos. 1, 3, 4, 14, 22, 26, 35, 43	1243	Hope and Fear	1285
To George Sand	1244	A Child's Future	1285
The Cry of the Children	1244	WALTER PATER	
EMILY BRONTË		Studies in the History of the Renais- sance — Conclusion	1286
Stanzas	1247	The Renaissance — Sandro Botti- celli	1287
The Old Stoic	1247	The Child in the House	1291
Last Lines	1247	ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON	
EDWARD FITZGERALD		A Gossip on Romance	1299
Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám of Naishápúr	1248	The Lantern-Bearers	1304
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI		Pulvis et Umbra	1309
The Blessed Damozel	1255	A Christmas Sermon	1312
Sister Helen	1256	JAMES THOMSON	
The Ballad of Dead Ladies: From François Villon	1259	Mater Tenebrarum	1316
Troy Town	1260	From <i>Sunday at Hampstead</i>	1317
The House of Life: The Sonnet	1261	From <i>The City of Dreadful Night</i>	1317
Love-Sight	1261	FRANCIS THOMPSON	
Silent Noon	1261	The Hound of Heaven	1319
The Choice	1261	Envoy	1321
Vain Virtues	1262	GEORGE MEREDITH	
Lost Days	1262	Modern Love. Nos. 1, 2, 48, 49, 50	1322
		Lucifer in Starlight	1323
		A Certain People	1323

A Stave of Roving Tim	1323	ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN	
Hard Weather	1324	Oh, when I was in Love with You . .	1341
Ode to the Comic Spirit	1325	To an Athlete Dying Young	1341
Love in the Valley	1329	White in the Moon the Long Road	
THOMAS HARDY		Lies	1342
Her Dilemma	1333	Into my Heart an Air that Kills . .	1342
Revulsion	1333	Think No More, Lad, Laugh, be	
Her Initials	1333	Jolly	1342
Rome	1334	When I came Last to Ludlow . . .	1342
Lausanne	1334	The Carpenter's Son	1342
An August Midnight	1334	JOHN MASEFIELD	
Embarcation	1334	A Consecration	1343
A Christmas Ghost-Story	1335	Cargoes	1343
"I Said to Love"	1335	Roadways	1344
To Life	1335	The West Wind	1344
At Casterbridge Fair:		Sea-Fever	1345
The Ballad-Singer	1335	On Growing Old	1345
Former Beauties	1336	WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS	
After the Club-Dance	1336	When you are Old	1346
The Market-Girl	1336	The Voice	1346
The Inquiry	1336	The Song of the Happy Shepherd . .	1346
A Wife Waits	1336	The Falling of the Leaves	1346
After the Fair	1337	INDEX TO THE MAP	iii
RUDYARD KIPLING		INDEX OF AUTHORS, TITLES, AND	
A Ballad of East and West	1337	FIRST LINES OF POETRY	v
Fuzzy-Wuzzy	1339		
Gunga Din	1340		
L'Envoi	1341		
Recessional	1341		

A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF TYPES OF LITERATURE

The general arrangement of this anthology is intended to present the development of English literature in historical sequence. For a simultaneous study of forms and types of literature the following classification is offered.

THE EPIC

The epic is a long narrative poem written in an elevated style, based on a racial or national theme, and dealing with supernatural and heroic characters. Folk epics arose spontaneously among primitive peoples; examples are *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Imitations of these in more sophisticated times are called literary epics, the classical example of which is Virgil's *Æneid*. The epic is also imitated for humorous effect in the mock-heroic poem.

ANGLO-SAXON

BEOWULF, 2

ELIZABETHAN

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY

Virgil's *Æneid*, 162

EDMUND SPENSER

The Faerie Queene, Book I (Allegory), 166

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN MILTON

Paradise Lost: Book I, 376

Book II, 386

Mock Epics

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ALEXANDER POPE

The Rape of the Lock, 520

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Don Juan, 805

THE BALLAD

The ballad is a short story in song. It employs a simple meter, usually stanzas of

four lines, alternately of four and three feet, sometimes with a refrain. Like the folk epic, the ballad arose spontaneously in primitive times. It was preserved by memory, and only later were the original ballads written down. Most of the famous old ballads in English date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The revival of interest in the past during the eighteenth century led to the recovery and preservation of ballads — Percy's *Reliques of Old English Poetry* being the most famous collection — and to their imitation, as a form of literature.

LATER MIDDLE AGES

THE POPULAR BALLADS

The Douglas Tragedy, 130

Edward, 131

Babylon; or, the Bonnie Banks o' Fordie, 132

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet, 132

Lamkin, 134

The Gay Goss-Hawk, 135

The Three Ravens, 136

The Twa Corbies, 136

Sir Patrick Spence, 137

The Wife of Usher's Well, 137

The Dæmon Lover, 138

Hugh of Lincoln, 138

Chevy Chase, 139

Robin Hood Rescuing the Widow's Three Sons, 142

Robin Hood's Death and Burial, 144

Mary Hamilton, 145

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, 731

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Jock of Hazeldean, 770

JOHN KEATS

La Belle Dame sans Merci, 844

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

The Revenge, 1092

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Sister Helen, 1256

Troy Town, 1260

RUDYARD KIPLING

A Ballad of East and West, 1337

THE ROMANCE

The romance is a type of narrative in verse or prose which flourished especially in the Middle Ages. It dealt with aristocratic themes of war, adventure, and love, in a spirit of idealism. It was revived in modern times, particularly in connection with the romantic movement of the nineteenth century. Browning developed a type of narrative poem which he called the dramatic romance, examples of which have been included under this heading.

LATER MIDDLE AGES

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

The Franklin's Tale, 81

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, 105

SIR THOMAS MALORY

Le Morte Darthur: Book XXI, 146

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Christabel, 740

JOHN KEATS

The Eve of St. Agnes, 835

Lamia, 845

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

The Lady of Shalott, 1055

Morte D'Arthur, 1067

ROBERT BROWNING

My Last Duchess, 1098

The Last Ride Together, 1108

A Grammarian's Funeral, 1109

The Statue and the Bust, 1110

"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came,"

1114

WILLIAM MORRIS

The Defence of Guenevere, 1264

The Haystack in the Floods, 1269

THE TALE

The tale corresponds in popular literature to the romance in aristocratic. It is an unpretending and realistic narrative of events and human characteristics. Great numbers of tales were afloat in the Middle Ages, preserved, like the ballads, by oral tradition. Many were directed to moral edification; others to counsel in ways of gaining worldly success; others merely recorded striking or humorous episodes, practical jokes, etc. Many collections of tales were made in the Renaissance, such as those of Boccaccio in Italy, and Chaucer in England. It was a convention to bind such collections together by a frame story, such as that furnished by Chaucer's account of the Canterbury pilgrims. The short story is a modern outgrowth of the tale, differing chiefly in its unity and concentration, and its avoidance of diffusion of interest. Examples of modern short stories are those of Poe, Stevenson, and Kipling.

LATER MIDDLE AGES

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

The Canterbury Tales:

The Prologue, 50

The Nun's Priest's Tale, 60

The Pardoner's Tale, 66

The Prioress's Tale, 73

The Friar's Tale, 76

JOHN GOWER

The Tale of Florent, 100

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT BURNS

The Twa Dogs, 652

Tam o' Shanter, 661

THE ALLEGORY

The allegory is a story in prose or verse specifically intended to teach a lesson, in which the characters are personifications of

human qualities. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is a well-known example. The fables of Æsop and the parables of Jesus are short allegories.

LATER MIDDLE AGES

The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman, 43

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

The Parliament of Fowls, 91

ELIZABETHAN

EDMUND SPENSER

The Faerie Queene:
Book I, 166.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JONATHAN SWIFT

Gulliver's Travels: A Voyage to Lilliput
462

JOHN GAY

Fables:

The Monkey Who had Seen the World,
550

The Fox at the Point of Death, 551

The Hare and Many Friends, 551

JAMES THOMSON

The Castle of Indolence, 558

OTHER NARRATIVE POEMS

ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

ANONYMOUS

The Wanderer, 30

The Battle of Brunanburh, 33

The Battle of Maldon, 35

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ALEXANDER POPE

Eloisa to Abelard, 530

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lucy Gray, 690

Michael, 691

Laodamia, 714

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

The Prisoner of Chillon, 793

Mazeppa, 797

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

A Fiesolan Idyll, 855

PROSE NARRATIVE

ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

THE VENERABLE BEDE

Bede's Account of the Poet Cædmon, 28

KING ALFRED THE GREAT

The Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan, 31

ELIZABETHAN

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

From *The Discovery of Guiana*, 255

From *The History of the World*, 257

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ISAAC WALTON

The Third Day: From *The Compleat Angler*, 342

THE LYRIC

The lyric is a short poem expressive of the emotion of the author or of some character whom he represents. It was originally intended to be sung, but often in modern times it merely suggests a connection with music. The lyric is various in its forms and uses.

The Sonnet

Of the established forms of lyric the sonnet is most important. Originating in Southern France in the twelfth century, it was introduced into Italy, where it was practiced by Dante, Petrarch, and other poets. It was brought to England in the early sixteenth century by Sir Thomas Wyatt. It enjoyed great vogue in the later years of the century, as an expression of courtly love. Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Daniel, Drayton, and many others wrote series or sequences of sonnets. The sonnet was also turned to reflective and religious, and later to political themes.

The sonnet properly consists of fourteen lines of five feet, divided into two parts, the

octave of eight and the sestet of six lines. In the Italian sonnet the octave rhymes *abbaabba*; the sestet employs the rhymes *cde* in various orders, avoiding the couplet at the close. The English sonnet is an adaptation used by the Earl of Surrey, which consists of three quatrains, *ab ab, cd cd, ef ef*, closed by a couplet *gg*. This form was followed by Shakespeare. The sonnet sequence lends itself to narrative as in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, and in Meredith's *Modern Love*, where the "sonnet" is expanded to sixteen lines.

ELIZABETHAN

SIR THOMAS WYATT

The Lover Compareth His State to a Ship
in Perilous Storm Tossed on the Sea, 157

The Lover having Dreamed of Enjoying of
His Love, etc., 157

A Renouncing of Love, 157

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY

Description of Spring, 160

Complaint of a Lover Rebuked, 160

A Complaint by Night of the Lover not
Beloved, 160

EDMUND SPENSER

Amoretti, 250

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

A Vision upon this Conceit of the Faerie
Queene, 253

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Astrophel and Stella, 259

SAMUEL DANIEL

Sonnets: From *Delia*, 272

MICHAEL DRAYTON

Sonnets: From *Idea*, 273

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Sonnets, 283

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN MILTON

On His Being Arrived to the Age of
Twenty-Three, 374

When the Assault was Intended to the
City, 374

To the Lord General Cromwell, 374

On the Late Massacre in Piemont, 374

On His Blindness, 375

On His Deceased Wife, 375

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THOMAS GRAY

Sonnet: On the Death of Mr. Richard
West, 570

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Composed upon Westminster Bridge, 702

Composed by the Seaside near Calais, 702

It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free,
702

On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic,
702

To Toussaint L'Ouverture, 703

Near Dover, September, 1802, 703

Written in London, 1802, 703

London, 1802, 703

The World is Too Much with Us, 712

Mutability, 718

Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, 718

The Trosachs, 718

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Sonnet on Chillon, 793

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Ozymandias, 813

JOHN KEATS

Sonnet, 832

To My Brothers, 832

Two Sonnets on Fame, 844

To Sleep, 845

Sonnet: To a Young Lady Who Sent Me
a Laurel Crown, 845

Sonnet, 854

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Quiet Work, 1166

Shakespeare, 1166

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

Sonnets from the Portuguese, 1243

To George Sand, 1244

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The House of Life:

The Sonnet, 1261

Love-Sight, 1261

Silent Noon, 1261

The Choice, 1261

Vain Virtues, 1262

Lost Days, 1262
A Superscription, 1262
The One Hope, 1263

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and
George Eliot, 1284
Hope and Fear, 1285

GEORGE MEREDITH

Modern Love, 1322
Lucifer in Starlight, 1323
A Certain People, 1323

THOMAS HARDY

Revulsion, 1333
Embarcation, 1334

The Ode

The ode was a form of lyric poetry of recognized structure among the Greeks. Pindar's odes have been imitated by English poets, notably Cowley and Gray, but in general the term is applied by poets freely to sustained lyric utterances, based on elevated themes and often intended for some dignified celebration. The ode form usually connotes irregular structure, permitting change of rhythm, meter, and rhyme scheme according to the mood.

ELIZABETHAN

ROBERT GREENE

Philomela's Ode, 269

MICHAEL DRAYTON

Ode XI: To the Virginian Voyage (Patriotic), 273
Ode XII: The Ballad of Agincourt (Patriotic), 274

BEN JONSON

A Pindaric Ode, 292

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ANDREW MARVELL

Horation Ode upon Cromwell's Return
from Ireland (Patriotic), 322

ROBERT HERRICK

An Ode for Ben Jonson (Friendship), 337

JOHN MILTON

L'Allegro (Nature), 367
Il Penseroso (Nature), 369

JOHN DRYDEN

A Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 431
Alexander's Feast; or, The Power of
Music, 432

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THOMAS GRAY

Ode on the Spring (Nature), 569
Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College
(Nature), 569
Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat, 570
The Progress of Poesy (Pindaric), 573
The Bard (Pindaric), 574

WILLIAM COLLINS

Ode to Evening (Nature), 577
The Passions: An Ode for Music, 577
Ode: Written in the Beginning of the Year
1746 (Patriotic), 579

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Ode to Duty, 707
Ode on Intimations of Immortality from
Recollections of Early Childhood, 710

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Dejection: An Ode, 747

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Ode to the West Wind, 814

JOHN KEATS

Ode, 841
Ode on a Grecian Urn, 841
Ode to a Nightingale, 842
Ode to Melancholy, 843
To Autumn, 843

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington (Elegy), 1084

FRANCIS THOMPSON

The Hound of Heaven, 1319

GEORGE MEREDITH

Ode to the Comic Spirit, 1325

The Elegy

The eclogue and elegy were originally of late Greek origin. The poet Theocritus in Alexandria, remembering the songs of goat-

herds which he had heard in his native Sicily, imitated them in more cultivated form. Some of these were love songs, others songs sung in competition among shepherds for prizes, others were dirges on the death of a dead shepherd. This pastoral verse was imitated by Virgil, and later by the poets of the Renaissance. In particular, the elegy became a recognized medium for the expression of grief, and many of the great mourning poems in English have taken this form.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN MILTON

Lycidas, 370

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Adonais, 819

Elegiac Poems and Epitaphs

ELIZABETHAN

HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY

On the Death of Sir Thomas Wyatt, 161

BEN JONSON

To the Memory of My Beloved Master,
William Shakespeare, 291

Epitaph on Elizabeth L. H., 294

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM BROWNE

On the Countess Dowager of Pembroke,
316

THOMAS CAREW

Epitaph, 317

ANDREW MARVELL

An Epitaph, 324

ROBERT HERRICK

Upon a Child, 336

Upon Ben Jonson, 337

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THOMAS GRAY

Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,
571

WILLIAM COLLINS

Dirge in Cymbeline, 579

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lucy, 688

At the Grave of Burns, 704

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Soldier, Rest! Thy Warfare O'er: From
The Lady of the Lake, Canto I, 768

Coronach: From *The Lady of the Lake*,
Canto III, 769

Proud Maisie: From *The Heart of Mid-*
lothian, 771

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Rose Aylmer, 855

THOMAS HOOD

The Death Bed, 871

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead:
From *The Princess*, 1077

In Memoriam A. H. H., 1078

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Requiescat, 1176

Rugby Chapel, 1181

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

To an Athlete Dying Young, 1341

The Dramatic Lyric

The dramatic lyric is a poem defined by Browning as lyric in expression, but dramatic in principle, the thought or feeling attributed to some person other than the author.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT BURNS

The Jolly Beggars, 663

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Prometheus Unbound: End of the last act,
815

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

Cenone, 1057

Ulysses, 1071

Locksley Hall, 1071

Northern Farmer, Old Style, 1090

Rizpah, 1094

ROBERT BROWNING

Cavalier Tunes:

Marching Along, 1097

Give a Rouse, 1097

Boot and Saddle, 1098

Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister, 1099

The Lost Leader, 1100

Meeting at Night, 1100

Parting at Morning, 1101

Home-Thoughts, from Abroad, 1101

Love Among the Ruins, 1103

Up at a Villa — Down in the City, 1104

A Toccata of Galuppi's, 1105

One Way of Love, 1106

Respectability, 1106

Memorabilia, 1107

MATTHEW ARNOLD

The Forsaken Merman, 1167

WILLIAM MORRIS

The Eve of Crécy, 1269

THOMAS HARDY

Her Dilemma, 1333

At Casterbridge Fair:

After the Club-Dance, 1336

The Inquiry, 1336

A Wife Waits, 1336

RUDYARD KIPLING

Fuzzy-Wuzzy, 1339

Gunga Din, 1340

Miscellaneous Lyrics

Many lyrics which cannot be indexed under the foregoing divisions may be classified according to subject matter under: Religion, Love, Friendship, Drinking Songs, Nature, Patriotism and War, Childhood, Reflection.

Religion

ELIZABETHAN

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

His Pilgrimage, 254

Verses Found in His Bible in the Gate-House at Westminster, 254

THOMAS NASH

Litany in Time of Plague, 276

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

HENRY VAUGHAN

The Retreat, 325

The World, 325

Departed Friends, 326

JOHN DONNE

A Hymn to God the Father, 329

ROBERT HERRICK

A Thanksgiving to God for His House, 338

His Litany to the Holy Spirit, 339

GEORGE HERBERT

Virtue, 340

Love, 340

The Pulley, 341

The Collar, 341

The Quip, 341

The World, 342

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM COWPER

Walking with God, 639

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

The Destruction of Sennacherib, 774

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

The Higher Pantheism, 1092

Crossing the Bar, 1096

ROBERT BROWNING

The Guardian-Angel, 1107

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Qui Laborat, Orat, 1241

RUDYARD KIPLING

Recessional, 1341

Love

LATER MIDDLE AGES

Alysoun, 42

ELIZABETHAN

SIR THOMAS WYATT

The Lover Beseecheth His Mistress not to Forget His Steadfast Faith and True Intent, 157

- An Earnest Suit to His Unkind Mistress
not to Forsake Him, 157
The Lover Complaineth the Unkindness
of His Love, 158
- EDMUND SPENSER
Prothalamion, 250
- SIR WALTER RALEIGH
The Silent Lover, 254
- SIR PHILIP SIDNEY
The Bargain, 258
Love is Dead, 260
- JOHN LYLY
Apelles' Song: From *Campaspe*, 267
- GEORGE PEELE
Song: From *The Arraignment of Paris*, 268
Harvestmen A-Singing: From *The Old Wives' Tale*, 268
- ROBERT GREENE
Menaphon's Song: From *Menaphon*, 269
The Shepherd's Wife's Song: From *Mena-
phon*, 270
- SAMUEL DANIEL
Love is a Sickness, 271
- CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE
The Passionate Shepherd to His Love, 276
- THOMAS CAMPION
My Sweetest Lesbia, 277
When to Her Lute Corinna Sings, 277
Vain Men, Whose Follies Make a God of
Love, 278
Never Love Unless You Can, 278
Cherry Ripe, 278
- JOHN FLETCHER
Aspatia's Song: From *The Maid's Tragedy*,
279
Away, Delights: From *The Captain*, 279
Love's Emblems: From *Valentinian*, 280
- WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
Who is Silvia? From *The Two Gentlemen
of Verona*, 288
Tell me, Where is Fancy Bred? From *The
Merchant of Venice*, 288
Sigh no more: From *Much Ado about
Nothing*, 289
- O Mistress Mine, where Are You Roaming:
From *Twelfth Night*, 289
Come Away, Come Away, Death: From
Twelfth Night, 289
Take, O, Take Those Lips Away: From
Measure for Measure, 290
Hark, Hark! the Lark: From *Cymbeline*, 290
- BEN JONSON
Song to Celia, 291
- SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
- GEORGE WITHER
Shall I, Wasting in Despair, 315
I Loved a Lass, 315
- WILLIAM BROWNE
For Her Gait, if She be Walking, 316
- THOMAS CAREW
Song, 316
Persuasions to Joy: A Song, 316
Ingrateful Beauty Threatened, 316
The Unfading Beauty, 317
- SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT
Song, 317
- EDMUND WALLER
Go, Lovely Rose! 318
On a Girdle, 318
To Phyllis, 318
- SIR JOHN SUCKLING
A Doubt of Martyrdom, 319
The Constant Lover, 319
Why so Pale and Wan? 319
- RICHARD CRASHAW
Wishes to His Supposed Mistress, 319
- RICHARD LOVELACE
To Lucasta, On Going to the Wars, 321
To Althea, from Prison, 321
- ANDREW MARVELL
To His Coy Mistress, 323
- JOHN DONNE
Song, 327
A Valediction Forbidding Mourning, 327
The Indifferent, 327
Song, 328
The Funeral, 328
The Canonization, 329
Love's Deity, 329

ROBERT HERRICK

- Upon the Loss of His Mistresses, 330
 Cherry-Ripe, 331
 Corinna's Going A-Maying, 331
 To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time, 332
 To Anthea, Who may Command Him Anything, 332
 His Request to Julia, 332
 Upon Julia's Clothes, 332
 To Silvia, 333
 Upon Mistress Susanna Southwell Her Feet, 333
 To Electra, 333
 Delight in Disorder, 334
 The Bracelet to Julia, 334
 The Primrose, 334
 The Mad Maid's Song, 336
 The Night-Piece, to Julia, 336
 Dissuasions from Idleness, 337

ABRAHAM COWLEY

- The Thief, 365

JOHN DRYDEN

- Ah, How Sweet it is to Love! 434

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN GAY

- Sweet William's Farewell to Black-Eyed Susan, 549
 Over the Hills and Far Away: From *The Beggar's Opera*, 552
 Youth's the Season: From *The Beggar's Opera*, 552
 Come, Sweet Lass: From *The Beggar's Opera*, 552
 Love's Resort: From *Acis and Galatea*, 552
 Galatea: From *Acis and Galatea*, 552

ROBERT BURNS

- My Nanie, O, 668
 Green Grow the Rashes, O, 668
 Will Ye Go to the Indies, My Mary, 669
 Of a' the Airts, 669
 John Anderson My Jo, 670
 Tam Glen, 670
 Ae Fond Kiss, 671
 Sweet Afton, 671
 Ye Flowery Banks, 672
 A Red, Red, Rose, 672
 Last May a Braw Wooer, 672
 Highland Mary, 673

- O, Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast, 674
 Mary Morison, 674

WILLIAM BLAKE

- Song, 675
 Song, 676
 The Clod and the Pebble, 678
 Love's Secret, 679

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

- She was a Phantom of Delight, 705

SIR WALTER SCOTT

- Lochinvar: From *Marmion*, Canto V,
 Lady Heron's Song, 766

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

- When We Two Parted, 774
 So We'll Go No More A Roving, 797
 Stanzas, 810

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

- The Indian Serenade, 815
 To ———, 830

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

- Come into the Garden, Maud: From
Maud, 1088
 O That 'Twere Possible: From *Maud*, 1089

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

- The Blessed Damozel, 1255

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

- A Match, 1277

JAMES THOMSON

- Mater Tenebrarum, 1316
 From *Sunday at Hampstead*, 1317

GEORGE MEREDITH

- Love in the Valley, 1329

THOMAS HARDY

- At Casterbridge Fair:
 The Ballad-Singer, 1335
 The Market-Girl, 1336

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

- Oh, When I was in Love with You, 1341
 White in the Moon the Long Road Lies,
 1342

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

- When You are Old, 1346
 The Falling of the Leaves, 1346

Friendship

ELIZABETHAN

FRANCIS BEAUMONT

Master Francis Beaumont's Letter to
Ben Jonson, 280

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT HERRICK

His Prayer to Ben Jonson, 336

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM COWPER

To Mary, 650

ROBERT BURNS

Auld Lang Syne, 670

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

She Walks in Beauty, 774

To Thomas Moore, 797

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

When I Came Last to Ludlow, 1342

Drinking Songs

ELIZABETHAN

ANONYMOUS

Back and Side, Go Bare, Go Bare, 271

JOHN FLETCHER

Song to Bacchus: From *Valentinian*, 279

Drink To-day: From *The Bloody Brother*,
279

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT HERRICK

A Lyric to Mirth, 332

A Bacchanalian Verse, 332

To Live Merrily, and to Trust to Good
Verses, 333

ABRAHAM COWLEY

Anacreontics: Drinking, 364

The Epicure, 365

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT BURNS

The Silver Tassie, 669

Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut, 671

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

To Thomas Moore, 797

Nature

LATER MIDDLE AGES

EARLY ENGLISH LYRICS

"Sumer is icumen in," 42

ELIZABETHAN

JOHN LYLY

Spring's Welcome: From *Campaspe*, 267

THOMAS NASH

Spring, 276

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

When Icicles Hang by the Wall: From
Love's Labour's Lost, 288

Under the Greenwood Tree: From *As You
Like It*, 289

Where the Bee Sucks: From *The Tempest*,
290

BEN JONSON

Hymn to Diana: From *Cynthia's Revels*,
291

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ANDREW MARVELL

The Garden, 324

ROBERT HERRICK

The Argument of His Book, 330

His Tears to Thamesis, 334

To Daffodils, 335

To Blossoms, 337

The Hag, 338

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT BURNS

To a Mountain Daisy, 658

To a Mouse, 658

WILLIAM BLAKE

The Lamb, 676

The Tiger, 678

Night, 678

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lines Written in Early Spring, 685

The Simplan Pass, 690

To the Cuckoo, 700
 To the Daisy, 703
 The Solitary Reaper, 705
 I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, 706
 To a Skylark, 708

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
 Kubla Khan, or A Vision in a Dream, 730

SIR WALTER SCOTT
 Brignall Banks: From *Rokeby*, 769

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
 The Cloud, 816
 To a Skylark, 817
 To Night, 819
 A Dirge, 831

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON
 Break, Break, Break, 1076
 The Splendor Falls on Castle Walls: From
The Princess, 1076

ROBERT BROWNING
 Pippa's Song, 1097

MATTHEW ARNOLD,
 Lines written in Kensington Gardens,
 1174

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH
 Ite Domum Saturæ, Venit Hesperus, 1241

JOHN MASEFIELD
 Roadways, 1344
 The West Wind, 1344
 Sea-Fever, 1345

Patriotism and War

ELIZABETHAN

GEORGE PEELE
 Farewell to Arms, 268

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JAMES THOMSON
 Rule, Britannia, 557

ROBERT BURNS
 Scots, Wha Hae wi' Wallace Bled, 673

WILLIAM COWPER
 On the Loss of the Royal George, 648

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
 Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle,
 713

SIR WALTER SCOTT
 Prologue to *The Lady of the Lake*, 767
 Boat Song: From *The Lady of the Lake*,
 Canto II, 768
 Pibroch of Donald Dhu, 770
 Bonny Dundee, 771
 Here's a Health to King Charles, 772

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON
 The Charge of the Light Brigade, 1087

Childhood

ELIZABETHAN

ROBERT GREENE
 Sephestia's Song to Her Child: From
Menaphon, 269

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ROBERT HERRICK
 A Grace for a Child, 335

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM BLAKE
 Introduction to Songs of Innocence, 676
 Infant Joy, 677
 The Little Black Boy, 677
 Cradle Song: From *Songs of Experience*,
 678
 A Little Boy Lost, 678

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

SIR WALTER SCOTT
 Lullaby of an Infant Chief, 770

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING
 The Cry of the Children, 1244

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE
 A Child's Future, 1285

Reflection

LATER MIDDLE AGES

GEOFFREY CHAUCER
 The Minor Poems:

Truth, 99
 Gentillesse, 99
 The Complaint of Chaucer to His
 Empty Purse, 100

ELIZABETHAN

SIR THOMAS WYATT
 Of the Mean and Sure Estate, 158
 HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY
 Prisoned in Windsor, He Recounteth His
 Pleasure There Passed, 160
 The Means to Attain Happy Life, 161

SIR WALTER RALEIGH
 The Lie, 255

THOMAS SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST
 Complaint of the Duke of Buckingham,
 265

SIR EDWARD DYER
 My Mind to Me a Kingdom is, 266

ROBERT GREENE
 Song: From *The Farewell to Folly*, 268

ANONYMOUS
 Crabbed Age and Youth: From *The Pas-*
sonate Pilgrim, 270
 Hey Nonny No! 270

SAMUEL DANIEL
 To the Lady Margaret, Countess of
 Cumberland, 271

THOMAS CAMPION
 Whether Men do Laugh or Weep, 277
 Chance and Change, 278

JOHN FLETCHER
 Melancholy: From *The Nice Valour*, 279
 Invocation to Sleep: From *Valentinian*,
 279
 Weep no More: From *The Queen of*
Corinth, 280

FRANCIS BEAUMONT
 On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey, 280

JOHN WEBSTER
 Vanitas Vanitatum, 281

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
 Fear no More the Heat o' the Sun: From
Cymbeline, 290
 Full Fathom Five Thy Father Lies: From
The Tempest, 290

BEN JONSON
 Simplex Munditiis: From *Epicæne*, 291
 A Farewell to the World, 294

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT
 To a Mistress Dying, 317

EDMUND WALLER
 Old Age, 318

JOHN DONNE
 Death, 328

ROBERT HERRICK
 When He Would Have His Verses Read,
 330
 To Music, to Becalm His Fever, 333
 The Country Life, 335
 The Hock Cart; or, Harvest Home, 336
 His Winding-Sheet, 338
 His Return to London, 339
 On Himself, 340
 To His Book, 340

ABRAHAM COWLEY
 The Wish, 365
 A Supplication, 366

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM COWPER
 On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture
 out of Norfolk, 648
 The Castaway, 651

ROBERT BURNS
 Epistle to J. Lapraik, 659
 Is There for Honest Poverty, 674

WILLIAM BLAKE
 Mad Song, 675
 To the Muses, 676
 A Cradle Song, 677
 Stanzas from Milton, 679

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
 Expostulation and Reply, 686
 The Tables Turned, 686
 My Heart Leaps Up, 699
 Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, 713

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
 Youth and Age, 749
 Work Without Hope, 749

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Stanzas for Music, 775

On This Day I Complete My Thirty-
Sixth Year, 810

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, 812

Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples,
813

Time, 819

Mutability, 819

The Final Chorus from *Hellas*, 828

Lines: When the Lamp is Shattered, 830

JOHN KEATS

Robin Hood, 833

Stanzas, 833

Lines on the Mermaid Tavern, 834

Fancy, 834

THOMAS HOOD

The Bridge of Sighs, 869

The Song of the Shirt, 870

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

The Lotos-Eaters, 1064

Tears, Idle Tears: From *The Princess*, 1076

Milton, 1090

ROBERT BROWNING

Prospice, 1125

Epilogue, 1126

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Empedocles on Etna: Empedocles' Song,
1168

Morality, 1173

Isolation, 1180

Dover Beach, 1181

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Say Not the Struggle Nought Availeth,
1239

Qua Cursum Ventus, 1240

Hope Evermore and Believe, 1240

Life is Struggle, 1242

In a London Square, 1242

All is Well, 1242

EMILY BRONTE

Stanzas, 1247

The Old Stoic, 1247

Last Lines, 1247

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The Ballad of Dead Ladies: From François

Villon, 1259

The Cloud Confines, 1263

WILLIAM MORRIS

An Apology: Prologue to *The Earthly
Paradise*, 1271

L'Envoi to *The Earthly Paradise*, 1272

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Choruses from *Atalanta in Calydon*, 1274

Hymn to Proserpine, 1275

A Ballad of Burdens, 1277

The Garden of Proserpine, 1279

To Walt Whitman in America, 1282

A Ballad of François Villon, 1284

JAMES THOMSON

From *The City of Dreadful Night*, 1317

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Envoy, 1321

GEORGE MEREDITH

A Stave of Roving Tim, 1323

THOMAS HARDY

Her Initials, 1333

Rome, 1334

Lausanne, 1334

An August Midnight, 1334

A Christmas Ghost-Story, 1335

"I Said to Love," 1335

To Life, 1335

At Casterbridge Fair:

Former Beauties, 1336

After the Fair, 1337

RUDYARD KIPLING

L'Envoi, 1341

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN

Into My Heart an Air that Kills, 1342

Think No More, Lad; Laugh, Be Jolly,
1342

The Carpenter's Son, 1342

JOHN MASEFIELD

A Consecration, 1343

Cargoes, 1343

On Growing Old, 1345

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

The Voice, 1346

The Song of the Happy Shepherd, 1346

OTHER REFLECTIVE POEMS

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

ALEXANDER POPE

An Essay on Man. Of the Nature and
State of Man, with Respect to the Uni-
verse, 535

Moral Essays: Of the Use of Riches, 538

JAMES THOMSON

The Seasons: Winter, 553

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The Deserted Village, 612

WILLIAM COWPER

The Task: Book IV, The Winter Even-
ing, 639

ROBERT BURNS

The Cotter's Saturday Night, 655

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tin-
tern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of
the Wye during a Tour July 13, 1798,
687

Resolution and Independence, 700

Elegiac Stanzas, 706

Character of the Happy Warrior, 708

Composed upon an Evening of Extraor-
dinary Splendor and Beauty, 717

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Frost at Midnight, 739

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, 775

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON

The Poet, 1054

The Palace of Art, 1060

ROBERT BROWNING

The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint
Praxed's Church, 1101

Fra Lippo Lippi, 1117

Andrea del Sarto, 1122

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Self-Dependence, 1172

The Buried Life, 1173

The Future, 1175

The Scholar-Gipsy, 1176

EDWARD FITZGERALD

Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám of Naishápúr,
1248

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Hertha, 1280

GEORGE MEREDITH

Hard Weather, 1324

SATIRE

The satire was originally a poem holding
up to ridicule and condemnation follies and
vices, private or public. In modern literature
satire is a mood rather than a specific form.

ELIZABETHAN

GEORGE GASCOIGNE

Piers Ploughman: From *The Steel Glass*,
266

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN DRYDEN

Mac Flecknoe, 428

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JONATHAN SWIFT

Gulliver's Travels: A Voyage to Lilliput,
462

An Argument Against Abolishing Chris-
tianity, 489

A Modest Proposal, 495

ALEXANDER POPE

Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, 541

JOHN GAY

From *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the
Streets of London*, 547

Woman's Chiefest Duty: From *Achilles*,
552

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

An Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog, 618
Stanzas on Woman, 618

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

From *Dipsychus*, 1239

The Latest Decalogue, 1240

THE EPIGRAM

The epigram is a condensed statement of
fact or opinion, usually in four lines.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN DRYDEN

Epigram on Milton, 434

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

On His Seventy-Fifth Birthday, 856

THE ESSAY

The essay is a form of prose which, like the lyric, is of wide and various application. Originally applied by Bacon to what he called "a set of dispersed meditations," as suggestive of their tentative character, it has been used to designate writings as different as Lamb's whimsical personalities, and Macaulay's brief biographies. Certain types of the essay may be distinguished as Personal or Familiar, Reflective or Philosophical, Historical, or as Criticism of Literature and Art, and Criticism of Life.

Personal or Familiar

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

ABRAHAM COWLEY

Of Myself, 363

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JOSEPH ADDISON and RICHARD STEELE

Essays from *The Tatler*:

On Duelling, 500

The Trumpet Club, 501

Character of the Upholsterer, 503

Character of Sir Timothy Tittle, 504

Early Rising, 506

Essays from *The Spectator*:

The Uses of the Spectator, 508

Signior Nicolini and the Lions, 509

Westminster Abbey, 511

The Vision of Mirzah, 512

Dissection of a Beau's Head, 514

Dissection of a Coquette's Heart, 516

On Waste of Time, 517

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Essays from *The Rambler*:

The Modern Novel, 580

The Private Life of an Author, 582

Crabbed Age and Youth, 584

The Busy Life of a Young Lady, 586

Essays from *The Idler*:

The Decay of Friendship, 588

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The Citizen of the World.

Letter XXI: At the Play-house, 618

Letter LI: The Bookseller, 621

Letter LIV: The Character of Beau Tibbs, 622

Letter LV: Beau Tibbs at Home, 623

Letter LXXI: Beau Tibbs at Vauxhall, 625

Letter LXXVII: The London Shop-Keeper, 627

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

CHARLES LAMB

Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago, 872

Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist, 878

Imperfect Sympathies, 882

Dream Children: A Reverie, 885

A Dissertation upon Roast Pig, 887

In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers, 891

Poor Relations, 894

A Character of the Late Elia, 897

WILLIAM HAZLITT

My First Acquaintance with Poets, 900

On Going a Journey, 909

The Fight, 914

A Farewell to Essay-Writing, 922

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

Suspiria de Profundis: Levana and Our

Ladies of Sorrow, 927

The English Mail Coach, 930

Reflective or Philosophical

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

FRANCIS BACON

Essays or Counsels Civil and Moral:

Of Truth, 299

Of Death, 300

Of Adversity, 300

Of Parents and Children, 301

Of Marriage and Single Life, 302

Of Love, 302

Of Great Place, 303

Of Boldness, 304

Of Superstition, 305

Of Travel, 306

Of Wisdom for a Man's Self, 307
 Of Friendship, 307
 Of Expense, 310
 Of Discourse, 311
 Of Custom and Education, 312
 Of Youth and Age, 312
 Of Negotiating, 313
 Of Studies, 314

SIR THOMAS BROWNE
 From *Religio Medici*, 347

Criticism of Literature and Art

ELIZABETHAN

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY
 From *The Defense of Poetry*, 260

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN DRYDEN
 From *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, 435

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
 Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, 718

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
 Biographia Literaria: Chapters X, XIV,
 XVII, XVIII, 749

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY
 Milton, 1002
 Francis Bacon, 1026

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

JOHN RUSKIN
 The Stones of Venice, Vol. II, Chapter
 VI, 1127

MATTHEW ARNOLD
 Essay on Wordsworth, 1206

WALTER PATER
 The Renaissance — Sandro Botticelli, 1287

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
 A Gossip on Romance, 1299

Criticism of Life

ELIZABETHAN

ROGER ASCHAM
 Introduction to Toxophilus, 162

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JONATHAN SWIFT
 An Argument Against Abolishing Chris-
 tianity, 489
 A Modest Proposal, 495

EDMUND BURKE
 From *Reflections on the Revolution in
 France*, 629

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

THOMAS CARLYLE
 Past and Present:
 Book III, Chapters XII, XIII; Book
 IV, Chapter I, 966

JOHN STUART MILL
 On Liberty, 981

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN
 From *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, 1039
 The Idea of a University — Discourse V:
 Liberal Knowledge Its Own End, 1044

JOHN RUSKIN
 The Stones of Venice, Vol. II, Chapter VI,
 1127
 Unto This Last, Essay I, 1152
 Fors Clavigera, Letter 5, 1159

MATTHEW ARNOLD
 Preface to *Essays in Criticism* — First
 Series, 1183
 The Function of Criticism at the Present
 Time, 1185
 Sweetness and Light, 1198

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY
 On the Advisableness of Improving Natu-
 ral Knowledge, 1220
 A Liberal Education; and Where to Find
 It, 1227
 On the Physical Basis of Life, 1230

WALTER PATER
 Studies in the History of the Renaissance
 — Conclusion, 1286

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
 The Lantern-Bearers, 1304
 Pulvis et Umbra, 1309
 A Christmas Sermon, 1312

THE DIALOGUE

The dialogue was a form of exposition and argument, largely used by Greek and Roman writers, the dialogues of Plato being most famous. It is only occasionally employed in modern times. Landon's *Imaginary Conversations* are in part directed to developing ideas and opinions; in part to revealing character.

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Imaginary Conversations:

Marcellus and Hannibal, 856

Leofric and Godiva, 857

Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, 860

Bossuet and the Duchess de Fontanges, 862

The Empress Catharine and Princess Dashkof, 866

THE ORATION

The oration was a classic form of great importance in the days of Athens and Republican Rome. British Parliamentary institutions also fostered a type of political argument intended for oral delivery. In the debates of the Long Parliament at the time of the Civil War, oratory was a great public weapon. Milton in approaching Parliament on the subject of a free press modeled his address on the classic orations of Isocrates. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries likewise furnished many examples of British eloquence of which Burke was the accepted master.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JOHN MILTON

Areopagitica, 399

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

EDMUND BURKE

From *The Impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq.*, 635

THE SERMON

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

JEREMY TAYLOR

From *Of Slavery and Pains Eternal*, 359

BIOGRAPHY AND
AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The biography was written in Greece and Rome largely for purposes of commemoration of, or inspiration to, civic virtue. In the Renaissance it became important as a record of experience, and this function has increased its interest and value until at present it is one of the most popular forms of literature. Realism and frankness of portrayal are necessary elements, in both of which Boswell's *Johnson* set a standard. Autobiography likewise owes its value to these qualities, of which Pepys' *Diary* is a notable instance.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

THOMAS FULLER

The Life of Sir Francis Drake, 356

SAMUEL PEPYS

From *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 423

JOHN BUNYAN

From *Grace Abounding*, 444

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

JAMES BOSWELL

From *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, 590

EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The Prelude:

From Book First: *Childhood and School-time*, 697

From Book Ninth: *Residence in France*, 697

LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

THOMAS CARLYLE

Sartor Resartus:

Book II, Chapters VII, VIII, IX; Book III, Chapter VIII, 948

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

From *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, 1039

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

Autobiography, 1215

WALTER PATER

The Child in the House, 1291

THE DRAMA AND THE NOVEL

Two important longer forms of literature, which cannot properly be represented in this work, are the drama and the novel.

The drama originated in religious ceremonies among primitive peoples, and achieved distinction in Athens in the fifth century B.C. and later in Rome. The drama in the Middle Age likewise owed its revival to religious influences, and scenes from the Bible, or the lives of the saints, were acted in the churches on appropriate days. These were later taken over by the guilds of artisans, and performed out of doors on holidays, upon movable stages or pageants. Gradually, companies of professional actors were formed who acted in the courtyards of inns, or other public places. Thus, the popular drama was secularized. At the same time a revival of the classical drama was taking place in schools and universities. The first theater was built in London in 1579. Others rapidly followed, and the drama written in blank verse became the leading form of popular literature in the early seventeenth century. With this greatest period of the flourishing of the drama are connected the names of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, and others. The theaters were closed by the Puritans in 1642, but reopened after the Restoration, when Dryden and Congreve became the leading dramatists. In the nineteenth century, determined efforts were made to revive the poetic drama, to which Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning contributed. Toward the close of the century, the realistic prose drama became a vehicle for social criticism in the hands of Mr. G. B. Shaw, Mr. John Galsworthy, and others.

A collection of plays illustrating fully the progress of the drama from the Middle Ages to the present is Matthews and Lieder, *The Chief British Dramatists*.

The novel is a long narrative in prose, partaking of the qualities of the epic, the romance, the tale, and, particularly in its modern form, of the biography. Features of the novel may also be attributed to the influence

of the drama, the essay, and the lyric. In the Elizabethan period, large numbers of stories were translated and adapted, one of them furnishing the germ of John Lyly's *Euphues*, a didactic narrative, accompanied by essays, which in the second part, *Euphues and His England*, becomes a sort of novel of manners. Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* shows the influence of the epic, through the Greek romance, and the romance of chivalry. A novel by Thomas Nash, called *The Unfortunate Traveller*, imitated in England a type of novel destined to be very popular, the picaresque romance, in which the hero of the chivalric romance, intent on idealistic adventure, is replaced by the *picaro*, or rogue, whose motive is the realistic one of cheating his way through the world.

The interest in human experience in the late seventeenth century showed itself in the popularity of biography, and this speedily became fiction. Defoe's novels, particularly *Robinson Crusoe*, are excellent examples of this process. Thenceforth the English novel may be described as fictional biography or autobiography. Such is the character of the eighteenth-century novels by Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. The didactic element appears strongly in fiction at the close of the eighteenth century, and at the same time the revival of romantic feeling shows itself in the novel dealing with the past.

In the fiction of the nineteenth century, the historical novel is important. From the time of Sir Walter Scott, nearly every great novelist has contributed to this type. The industrial and social problems of the century are reflected in the novels of Charles Dickens and Charles Kingsley. At the beginning of the century, we have admirable pictures of English manners in the novels of Jane Austen; and this realistic strain remains one of the chief qualities of nineteenth-century fiction, in Thackeray and Trollope. The philosophical element of fiction, reflecting the influence of science, becomes stronger in the work of George Eliot, George Meredith, and Thomas Hardy. Toward the close of the century, a revival of romanticism is seen in the work of Stevenson, Kipling, and Joseph Conrad.

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

The nineteenth century opened upon Europe distracted by war. The French Revolution, begun as a movement for freedom and the extension of political rights to the people, culminated in the general struggle between France and the other powers. In Great Britain, the doctrines of the Revolution at first were eagerly welcomed by many, as reflecting that spirit of individualism and revolt against society which was spreading through Europe in the latter part of the eighteenth century. On the other hand, the conservative mind, which sees in established institutions, social, political, and religious, the sacred results of a kind of instinctive wisdom on the part of the race, reacted vigorously against the subversive movement. The chief spokesman of this view was Edmund Burke. After the execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Great Britain declared war against France, and from that time on was the chief mover in the various coalitions against that country. Especially after Napoleon came into power, and tried to force Europe into a tariff union which threatened British trade, Great Britain was involved in a national crisis comparable to that which she had experienced under Elizabeth. Once more the country was threatened with invasion. And as the struggle with Philip II had led to an extraordinary outburst of patriotism, so did that with Napoleon: the height of national glory reached in the repulse of the Armada was touched again in Nelson's victory at Trafalgar and Wellington's at Waterloo.

The wars which followed the French Revolution were the first in which the people of the nation were deeply involved. Accordingly we find the Government resorting to espionage and punishment to suppress opinion hostile to the war. After the fall of Napoleon the Governments of the Great Powers formed a holy alliance to prevent any future revolutionary movement; and although Great Britain did not join this alliance, the policy continued of repressing sternly all popular demands for reform of institutions or freedom of discussion. These demands assumed a menacing character in consequence of a change in character on the part of the country — the most significant in its history since the Norman Conquest. Up to the close of the eighteenth century, Great Britain had remained in the main an agricultural country, with trade centering in a few large towns. A delightful picture of English middle-class society, unconcerned with any problem save that of perpetuating itself, is given in Miss Austen's novels. Early in the nineteenth century, however, a series of mechanical inventions led to the great advance in manufacturing which is called the Industrial Revolution. In the case of cloth, for example, in place of a hand loom operated by a weaver in his cottage, the power loom was installed in great buildings, which, located together, made the nucleus of industrial cities, from which goods were sent over the world. Between 1770 and 1831 the population of Liverpool multiplied five times. The population of Manchester rose from 41,000, in 1774, to 270,000, in 1831. The population of the entire country between 1800 and 1850 rose from 9,000,000, to 18,000,000. As there was no legislation to control the industrial development, there was great suffering on the part of the workers. The first step necessary to fit the government of Great Britain to these new conditions was a change in representation in Parliament, in which the landed interest controlled most of the seats. Postponed by the war with France, this reform was urged by the Whig Party after 1815, and finally carried amid great popular clamor in 1832.

The careers of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey may be regarded as typical of the changing attitude of men in this period. All three were in their early twenties when the French Revolution broke out, and all enthusiastically supported it, and opposed the war with France. All suffered somewhat from the persecution, political and social, which was directed against the pro-French. Later they rallied to the support of established institutions, accepting Burke's view of their sanction by divine guidance and human experience. They became opposed to democratic reforms in State, Church, and education. Sir Walter Scott was from his youth an advocate of aristocratic control. His martial poetry was an inspiration to his countrymen in time of war; and his novels threw a glamour about the aristocratic institutions which the country was fighting to defend. On the other hand, a group of poets of the succeeding generation were representative of the altered feeling of the time. Byron expressed the weariness of the human spirit in bondage to conventions and institutions, and became to all Europe a voice of protest and revolt. Shelley was a more sincere revolutionist, who had a program of doing away with authority and placing the relations of men and women on a basis of mutual trust and good will. A lesser poet, Thomas Hood, expressed in a few memorable lyrics the sufferings of the exploited workers.

All of these poets worked under the impulse, felt increasingly since the middle of the eighteenth century, toward the enlargement of the boundaries of poetry in subject-matter and technical forms. Wordsworth was the most important influence in this direction. He advanced the theory that the proper subject of poetry was the actual experience of simple country-folk, and its suitable language the words in which they naturally spoke. This was in opposition to the limitations which the early eighteenth century had accepted as to subject-matter and style. The enlargement of the subject-matter and technique of poetry took place in other directions also, under the impulse of that spirit of individual freedom and impatience of social restraint which we call romanticism.

The poets of the eighteenth century had tended, in their revival of classical tradition, to live together in London, and to seek uniformity in their habits and interests as well as their style. Among the early nineteenth-century poets, the most powerful impulse was escape. They did not congregate in London. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey settled near Lake Windermere and became known as the "Lake Poets." Wordsworth made specifically the greatest contribution to modern poetry in giving to it natural scenery as its subject-matter. Coleridge let his imagination feed upon his own consciousness, enriched by reading of remote times and places. Scott indulged in romantic reproductions of past ages. Byron and Shelley were both exiles from their native land; and both expressed imaginatively their spirit of revolt, the one in poetic tales of individual adventure, the other in dreams of the golden age. Keats escaped from the tedium of conventional life into the region of art. And all developed rare and wonderful forms of poetry, to fit themes which could not be dealt with in the prescribed forms of heroic couplet or pentameter blank verse. Altogether this period is one of immense expansion in poetry through the play of the imagination set free from social or conventional standards by the impulse of escape which we call romantic.

In prose literature the predominant forms, the novel and the essay, were inherited from the eighteenth century; but they experienced a similar enlargement. The work of Jane Austen, indeed, is the perfect flowering of the novel of manners and social life which came in with Richardson: but the fiction of her contemporaries, Jane Porter and Sir Walter Scott, showed the imaginative lure of the past. The essays of Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt are lineal descendants from *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, but they are infinitely richer in imagination and resources of style. Thomas De Quincey, like Coleridge, used his inner life as material for his most characteristic work; and his vast range of subject-matter is largely chosen for its quality of yielding to imaginative treatment. One enterprise which appealed to the romantic spirit of the age was the discovery of the half-forgotten writers of the seventeenth century. Lamb published specimens of their dramatic poetry; Hazlitt made them known by his lectures; and Lamb and Hazlitt with De Quincey were influenced by them in style. On the other hand, the new critical journals — the *Edinburgh Review*, founded in 1805, *The Quarterly* in 1809, *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1817 — were in the main concerned with the maintenance of accepted literary standards.

The literature of the early nineteenth century does not, on the whole, suggest the period of industrial problems, political strife, and social tension which was beginning. Scott, Coleridge, and Wordsworth dealt with the French Revolution: the latter celebrated the achievements and heroes of the war in splendid occasional verse. Shelley pictured the golden age returning; but of the Industrial Revolution through which Great Britain was passing they seem unconscious. Literature, although no longer resident extensively in London, was still something of an institution apart carried on by a special caste for a selected audience. Of the changes which were to break down this seclusion, to enlarge this audience from a group interested in literature as an art, to the vast mass of men and women concerned in their reading primarily with life and its issues, the first took place with the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832. Five years later, Queen Victoria succeeded to the throne, and the Victorian Age was officially begun.

The student will find the following works useful: O. Elton, *Survey of English Literature*, Vols. I and II; H. D. Traill, *Social England*, Vol. IV; W. L. Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, Vol. VI; E. Dowden, *The French Revolution and English Literature*; Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century*; C. H. Herford, *Age of Wordsworth*; H. A. Taine, *History of English Literature*, Vol. IV; A. Symonds, *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry*.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

William Wordsworth's life was long. Like his poetry, it was simple, calm, and sincere, with only here and there a flare-up of passion or vigorous action. He was born on April 7, 1770, at Cockermouth, in the Lake Country with which his name is forever linked. His mother died when he was eight, and his father five years later. After an elementary education at the village school in Hawkshead, he entered, in 1787, St. John's College, Cambridge, where he carried on his studies, evidently, in erratic fashion. During the year before his graduation he took a walking trip through the Alps, and in 1791, after taking his B.A., he went to France for over a year. The results of this visit are significant in the poet's development. Here he became engaged in a romantic love affair (recently uncovered sympathetically by Professors Harper and Legouis); his faith in nature and in childhood, already strong through the teachings of Rousseau and the circumstances of his upbringing, was increased; and his natural sympathy for the poor and lowly led him, under the influence of the French Revolution, to rebel against all shams and injustice in the social order.

Returning home, without funds and somewhat disillusioned by the Reign of Terror, he decided definitely to become a poet, a determination which was helped measurably by a small legacy from a

friend. He accordingly settled with his ever helpful and inspiring sister Dorothy, in Racedown, in Dorsetshire. In 1797 he became a neighbor of Coleridge's at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire. Here Wordsworth planned a monumental work, *The Recluse*, of which *The Recluse*, 1800, *The Prelude*, 1798-1805, and *The Excursion*, 1797-1814, long as they are, are but fragments of the unfinished whole. Here, too, with Coleridge he planned, and published in 1798, the famous *Lyrical Ballads*, in which Wordsworth was to make wonderful the familiar, and Coleridge was to familiarize the wonderful.

After eight months in Germany, 1798-99, Wordsworth moved with his sister to Grasmere. In 1802 he married Dorothy's friend, Mary Hutchinson. Of their five children two died in 1812. In 1814 he moved to Rydal Mount, where he had among his neighbors De Quincey, Coleridge, and Southey. The year 1843 brought him the laureateship. He died on April 23, 1850.

Wordsworth's life breaks in the middle. During the first half, he was of the eighteenth century, trusting his reason and his senses, with the fearlessness and hopefulness of youth. He was courageously non-conforming, with a vigorous optimism and a spontaneity almost pagan. During the latter half of his life these qualities are largely lacking. He foreshadows the "mid-Victorian." His optimism is argued. It is one's duty not to be pessimistic. He is serene, but it is not the serenity that he achieved from the struggle, as in his earlier years, but the calmness of the onlooker. He writes much, but his work is perfunctory, seldom inspired. *The Ode to Duty*, 1805, is, as Legouis points out, significant of a vital change in Wordsworth.

To Wordsworth poetry is the record and analysis of the human spirit. He strives truthfully to bring out of the chaos of life order and symmetry and all that makes for beauty. This beauty he finds most often when man is in close touch and in harmony with nature. It is for a good reason that he himself lived in the country, in daily association with the out-of-doors. From nature he derived most of his subjects; and in nature he found God manifested.

Wordsworth is often called a philosophic poet. This is not quite accurate, for he elaborates no great system. He has ideas, but they are the thoughts that come from intuition, what Shelley calls the visitations of the divine to man. His greatness lies in his ability to group details or feelings that every one recognizes into a poetic pattern which brings out the larger or the inner truth. He does not argue, but arranges and composes. His simplicity and directness in description of natural scenery, his sincerity and kindness, his meditative pathos, flash from his poems with a quiet, unexpected beauty. His genius removes what Coleridge calls "the film of familiarity," and shows us in simple things the sublime and wonderful that was hitherto hidden.

Wordsworth has written much that is commonplace. His best, however, places him among the greatest of English poets.

Excellent one-volume editions of the poems are the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company), the Globe (Macmillan), and the Oxford. The best critical biographies are by Legouis, Harper, and Sir Walter Raleigh. See also the essays by Matthew Arnold, Pater, and Swinburne. For reminiscences and contemporary accounts, see Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journals*, De Quincey, Coleridge, Hazlitt, and Jeffrey.

In the following selections Wordsworth's own headnotes are given whenever they exist. These are the notes that Wordsworth dictated to Miss Isabella Fenwick about 1843.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

"Actually composed while I was sitting by the side of the brook that runs down from the Comb, in which stands the village of Alford, through the grounds of Alfoxden. It was a chosen resort of mine. The brook fell down a sloping rock so as to make a waterfall considerable for that country, and across the pool below had fallen a tree, an ash if I rightly remember, from which rose perpendicularly, boughs in search of the light intercepted by the deep shade above. The boughs bore leaves of green that for want of sunshine had faded into almost lily-white; and from the underside of this natural sylvan bridge depended long and beautiful tresses of ivy which waved gently in the breeze that might poetically speaking be called the breath of the waterfall. This motion varied of course in proportion to the power of water in the brook. When, with dear friends, I revisited

this spot, after an interval of more than forty years, this interesting feature of the scene was gone. To the owner of the place I could not but regret that the beauty of this retired part of the grounds had not tempted him to make it more accessible by a path, not broad or obtrusive, but sufficient for persons who love such scenes to creep along without difficulty."—(Wordsworth.)

I heard a thousand blended notes
 While in a grove I sate reclined,
 In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
 The human soul that through me ran;
 And much it grieved my heart to think
 What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;

And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure, —
But the least motion which they made 15
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there. 20

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?
1798.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

"This poem is a favorite among the Quakers, as I have learnt on many occasions. It was composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in the spring of 1798." — (Wordsworth.)

"Why, William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books? — that light be-
queathed 15
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth, 10
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake, 15
And thus I made reply: —

"The eye, — it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will. 20

"Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum 25
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come
But we must still be seeking?

"Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may, 30
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."
1798.

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head, 5
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long, green fields has
spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife: 10
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things, 15
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless, —
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good, 15
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings, 25
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things, —
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart 30
That watches and receives.
1798.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN
 ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF
 THE WYE DURING A TOUR
 JULY 13, 1798

"No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my Sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the *Lyrical Ballads*." — (Wordsworth.)

Five years have past; five summers, with the length

Of five long winters! and again I hear
 These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs

With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs, 5
 That on a wild, secluded scene impress
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose

Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,

Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines 15

Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,

Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
 Through a long absence, have not been to me
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye: 24
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 With tranquil restoration: — feelings too 30
 Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts 34
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,

To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood
 In which the burden of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world, 40
 Is lightened: — that serene and blessed mood,

In which the affections gently lead us on, —
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep 45
 In body, and become a living soul:
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this
 Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft — 50
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee, 55
 O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!
 And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60
 The picture of the mind revives again:
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts

That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope, 65
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was
 when first

I came among these hills; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever nature led: more like a man 70
 Flying from something that he dreads, than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)

To me was all in all. — I cannot paint 75
 What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,

Their colors and their forms, were then to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love, 80
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, nor any interest

Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is
past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this 85
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour 89
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample
power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime 95
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels 100
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am
I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty
world 105

Of eye, and ear, — both what they half
create,

And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and
soul 110

Of all my moral being.

Nor per chance,

If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:

For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend;¹ and in thy voice I
catch 116

The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once, 120
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform 125
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish
men,

¹ His sister, Dorothy.

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life, 131
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk; 135
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh!
then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing
thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me, 145
And these my exhortations! Nor, per-
chance —

If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes
these gleams

Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long 151
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper
zeal 154

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty
cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were to
me

More dear, both for themselves and for thy
sake!

1798.

LUCY

Who Lucy was is not known. The only information that Wordsworth has given in regard to the five poems is that they were composed in Germany in 1799 — "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower" in the Hartz Forest.

I

Strange fits of passion have I known:

And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day 15
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

- Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea; 10
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.
- And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot 15
Came near, and nearer still.
- In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon. 20
- My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.
- What fond and wayward thoughts will
slide 25
Into a Lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"
- 2
She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove; 30
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.
- A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
— Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky. 35
- She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me! 40
- 3
I travelled among unknown men
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.
- 'Tis past, that melancholy dream! 45
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.
- Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire; 50
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.
- Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field 55
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.
- 4
Three years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown:
This Child I to myself will take; 60
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.
- "Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain, 65
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.
- "She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn 70
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.
- "The floating clouds their state shall lend 75
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Ev'n in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mold the maiden's form
By silent sympathy. 80
- "The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound 85
Shall pass into her face.
- "And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give 90
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."
- Thus Nature spake — The work was done —
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me 95
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.
- 5
A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears: 100

She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course 105
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1799.

LUCY GRAY

OR, SOLITUDE

"Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualising of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment." — (Wordsworth.)

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see, at break of day,
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew; 5
She dwelt on a wide moor, —
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green; 10
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night, —
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light 15
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon, —
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!" 20

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a fagot-band;

He plied his work; — and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe: 25
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wandered up and down; 30
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight 35
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on the hill they stood
That overlooked the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door. 40

They wept, — and, turning homeward, cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet!" —
When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge 45
They tracked the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
And by the long stone wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
The marks were still the same; 50
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank; 55
And further there were none!

— Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild. 60

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

1799.

THE SIMPLON PASS

———— Brook and road
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,
And with them did we journey several hours
At a slow step. The immeasurable height

Of woods decaying, never to be decayed, 5
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
 And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
 Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our ears, 10
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light — 15
 Were all like workings of one mind, the features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without end. 20

1799.

MICHAEL

A PASTORAL POEM

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as *The Brothers*. The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north."
 — (Wordsworth.)

If from the public way you turn your steps
 Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,
 You will suppose that with an upright path
 Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent
 The pastoral mountains front you, face to face. 5
 But, courage! for around that boisterous brook
 The mountains have all opened out themselves,
 And made a hidden valley of their own.
 No habitation can be seen; but they
 Who journey thither find themselves alone 10
 With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
 That overhead are sailing in the sky.
 It is in truth an utter solitude;

Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
 But for one object which you might pass by, 15
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!
 And to that simple object appertains
 A story — unenriched with strange events,
 Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me
 Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
 Whom I already loved; not verily
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills 25
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same 35
 For the delight of a few natural hearts;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;
 An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs, 45
 And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
 And watchful more than ordinary men.
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
 Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, he heard the South 50
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
 "The winds are now devising work for me!" 55
 And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
 Up to the mountains: he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him, and left him, on the heights. 60

So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
 And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed 65
 The common air; hills, which with vigorous step
 He had so often climbed; which had impressed
 So many incidents upon his mind
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
 The certainty of honorable gain;
 Those fields, those hills — what could they less? — had laid
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him 75
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.
 His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His Helpmate was a comely matron, old,
 Though younger than himself full twenty years. 80
 She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house: two wheels she had
 Of antique form; this large, for spinning wool;
 That small, for flax; and if one wheel had rest,
 It was because the other was at work. 85
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only Child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's phrase,
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm, 91
 The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say,
 That they were as a proverb in the vale
 For endless industry. When day was gone, 95
 And from their occupations out of doors
 The Son and Father were come home, even then,
 Their labor did not cease; unless when all
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk, 100

Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal
 Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
 And his old Father both betook themselves
 To such convenient work as might employ 105
 Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to card
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.
 Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge, 110
 That in our ancient uncouth country style
 With huge and black projection overbrowed
 Large space beneath, as duly as the light
 Of day grew dim, the Housewife hung a lamp;
 An aged utensil, which had performed 115
 Service beyond all others of its kind.
 Early at evening did it burn — and late,
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
 Which, going by from year to year, had found,
 And left, the couple neither gay perhaps 120
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
 Living a life of eager industry.
 And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
 There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
 Father and Son, while far into the night 125
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
 This light was famous in its neighborhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life 130
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake; 135
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named THE EVEN-
 ING STAR.
 Thus living on through such a length of years, 140
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear —
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood
 of all — 145

Than that a child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking
thoughts,

And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy! For often-
times

Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use 155
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind, 161
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's
stool

Sat with a fettered sheep before him
stretched

Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of
shade, 166

Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the
sun,

Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The CLIPPING TREE,¹ a name which yet it
bears.

There, while they two were sitting in the
shade, 170

With others round them, earnest all and
blithe,

Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the
shears. 176

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy
grew up

A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old,
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut 180
With his own hand a sapling, which he
hooped

With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock; 186
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help;

And for this cause not always, I believe, 190
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;
Though nought was left undone which staff,
or voice,

Or looks, or threatening gestures, could per-
form.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could
stand

Against the mountain blasts; and to the
heights, 195

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved be-
fore

Were dearer now? that from the Boy there
came 200

Feelings and emanations — things which
were

Light to the sun and music to the wind;
And that the old Man's heart seemed born
again?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew
up:

And now, when he had reached his eighteenth
year, 205

He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household
lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been
bound 210

In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfei-
ture, 215

A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for
claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost. 220
As soon as he had armed himself with
strength

To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.

Such was his first resolve; he thought
again, 225

And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think 231

¹ Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing. (Wordsworth.)

That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I;
 And I have lived to be a fool at last 235
 To my own family. An evil man
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us; and if he were not false,
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like
 this

Had been no sorrow. I forgive him; —
 but 240

'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

"When I began, my purpose was to speak
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.

Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free; 245
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
 Another kinsman, — he will be our friend
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
 Thriving in trade, — and Luke to him shall
 go, 250

And with his kinsman's help and his own
 thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then
 He may return to us. If here he stay,
 What can be done? Where every one is poor,
 What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind 256
 Was busy, looking back into past times.
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to
 herself,

He was a parish-boy; — at the church-
 door

They made a gathering for him, shillings,
 pence 260

And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbors
 bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's
 wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
 Went up to London, found a master there,
 Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy 265
 To go and overlook his merchandise
 Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous
 rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor,
 And, at his birth-place, built a chapel,
 floored

With marble which he sent from foreign
 lands. 270

These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
 Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
 And her face brightened. The old Man was
 glad,

And thus resumed: — "Well, Isabel! this
 scheme

These two days, has been meat and drink to
 me. 275

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
 — We have enough; — I wish indeed that I
 Were younger; — but this hope is a good
 hope.

— Make ready Luke's best garments, of the
 best 279

Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:

— If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields
 went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for five
 days

Was restless morn and night, and all day
 long 285

Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
 Things needful for the journey of her son.

But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
 To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
 By Michael's side, she through the last two
 nights 290

Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep:
 And when they rose at morning she could
 see

That all his hopes were gone. That day at
 noon

She said to Luke, while they two by them-
 selves 294

Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go:
 We have no other Child but thee to lose,
 None to remember; — do not go away,
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die."

The Youth made answer with a jocund
 voice;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears, 300
 Recovered heart. That evening her best
 fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work; 304
 And all the ensuing week the house appeared
 As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length
 The expected letter from their kinsman came,
 With kind assurances that he would do
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
 To which, requests were added, that forth-
 with 310

He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
 The letter was read over; Isabel

Went forth to show it to the neighbors
 round;

Nor was there at that time on English land
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When
 Isabel 315

Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
 "He shall depart to-morrow." To this word

The Housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should
go, 319

Would surely be forgotten. But at length
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead
Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheepfold; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss, 325
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's
edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he
walked:

And soon as they had reached the place he
stopped, 330

And thus the old Man spake to him: — "My
Son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full
heart

I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
And all thy life has been my daily joy. 335

I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good
When thou art from me, even if I should
touch

On things thou canst not know of. — After
thou 339

First cam'st into the world — as oft befalls
To new-born infants — thou didst sleep away
Two days, and blessings from thy Father's
tongue

Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed
on,

And still I loved thee with increasing love.

Never to living ear came sweeter sounds 345

Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
First uttering, without words, a natural tune;
While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-
lowed month, 349

And in the open fields my life was passed
And on the mountains; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's
knees.

But we were playmates, Luke: among these
hills,

As well thou knowest, in us the old and
young 354

Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."

Luke had a manly heart; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his
hand,

And said, "Nay, do not take it so — I see
That these are things of which I need not
speak. 360

— Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father: and herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands; for, though now
old

Beyond the common life of man, I still 365
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together: here they lived,
As all their Forefathers had done; and when
At length their time was come, they were not
loth

To give their bodies to the family mold. 370
I wished that thou should'st live the life they
lived:

But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burthened when they came
to me;

Till I was forty years of age, not more 375
Than half of my inheritance was mine.

I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my
work,

And till these three weeks past the land was
free.

— It looks as if it never could endure 379
Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused;
Then, pointing to the stones near which they
stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed: 384
"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone, —
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own
hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope; — we both may
live

To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale; — do thou thy
part; 390

I will do mine. — I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to thee:
Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone, 395
Before I knew thy face. — Heaven bless thee,
Boy!

Thy heart these two weeks has been beating
fast

With many hopes; it should be so; — yes —
yes —

I knew that thou could'st never have a wish
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound to
me 400

Only by links of love: when thou art gone,
What will be left to us! — But, I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son, 406
And of this moment; hither turn thy
thoughts,

And God will strengthen thee: amid all
fear

And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers
lived, 410

Who, being innocent, did for that cause
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee
well;

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt
see

A work which is not here: a covenant
'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate 415
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here; and Luke
stooped down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the
sight 420

The old Man's grief broke from him; to his
heart

He pressed his Son, he kissed him and wept;
And to the house together they returned.

— Hushed was that House in peace, or seem-
ing peace,

Ere the night fell: — with morrow's dawn the
Boy 425

Began his journey, and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face;

And all the neighbors, as he passed their
doors,

Came forth with wishes and with farewell
prayers, 429

That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman
come,

Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were
throughout 434

"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."

Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.

So, many months passed on: and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work

With confident and cheerful thoughts; and
now 439

Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke
began

To slacken in his duty; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses: ignominy and shame 445
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else 449
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:
I have conversed with more than one who
well

Remember the old Man, and what he was
Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to
age 454

Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,

And for the land, his small inheritance. 459
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet

The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man — and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone. 466

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was he
seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.

The length of full seven years, from time to
time, 470

He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,
And left the work unfinished when he died.

Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the estate

Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named the EVENING

STAR 476
Is gone; — the ploughshare has been through
the ground

On which it stood; great changes have been
wrought

In all the neighborhood: — yet the oak is
left

That grew beside their door; and the remains
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen 481

Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead
Ghyll.

1800.

THE PRELUDE

The poem is dedicated to "a dear friend, most
distinguished for his knowledge and genius," —
Coleridge.

In this long poem Wordsworth meant to em-
body his views on "man, nature, and society,"
to quote his own words. It is his poetic auto-

biography and confession of faith, in which are found his reactions to the events in his life, and the development of his philosophy, especially his belief that love of nature leads to love of man, that knowledge comes not so much from thinking as from deep feeling, and that this lofty feeling arises most often when one is in communion with nature.

From BOOK FIRST

INTRODUCTION — CHILDHOOD AND
SCHOOL-TIME

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile 426
The cottage windows blazed through twilight
gloom,
I heeded not their summons: happy time
It was indeed for all of us — for me
It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six, — I wheeled
about, 431
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with
steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase 435
And woodland pleasures, — the resounding
horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we
flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud; 440
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the
west 445
The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous
throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star 450
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning
still 455
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me — even as if the earth had
rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round! 460
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,

Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

From BOOK NINTH
RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

A band of military Officers, 125
Then stationed in the city, were the chief
Of my associates: some of these wore swords
That had been seasoned in the wars, and all
Were men well-born; the chivalry of France.
In age and temper differing, they had yet
One spirit ruling in each heart; alike 131
(Save only one, hereafter to be named)
Were bent upon undoing what was done:
This was their rest and only hope; therewith
No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
For worst to them was come; nor would have
stirred, 136
Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to
stir,
In anything, save only as the act
Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by
years, 139
Was in the prime of manhood, and erewhile
He had sat lord in many tender hearts;
Though heedless of such honors now, and
changed:
His temper was quite mastered by the times,
And they had blighted him, had eaten away
The beauty of his person, doing wrong 145
Alike to body and to mind: his port,
Which once had been erect and open, now
Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
Of symmetry and light and bloom, expressed,
As much as any that was ever seen, 151
A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour,
That from the press of Paris duly brought
Its freight of public news, the fever came,
A punctual visitant, to shake this man, 156
Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow
cheek
Into a thousand colors; while he read,
Or mused, his sword was haunted by his
touch
Continually, like an uneasy place 160
In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour
Of universal ferment; mildest men
Were agitated; and commotions, strife
Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with inquiet sounds. 165
The soil of common life was, at that time,
Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,
And not then only, "What a mockery this
Of history, the past and that to come!
Now do I feel how all men are deceived, 170

Reading of nations and their works, in faith,
Faith given to vanity and emptiness;
Oh! laughter for the page that would reflect
To future times the face of what now is!"

The land all swarmed with passion, like a
plain 175

Devoured by locusts, — Carra, Gorsas, —
add

A hundred other names, forgotten now,
Nor to be heard of more; yet, they were
powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by
day,

And felt through every nook of town and
field. 180

Meantime, day by day, the roads
Were crowded with the bravest youth of
France,

And all the promptest of her spirits, linked
In gallant soldiership, and posting on 265
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.

Yet at this very moment do tears start
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep —
I wept not then, — but tears have dimmed
my sight,

In memory of the farewells of that time,
Domestic severings, female fortitude 271

At dearest separation, patriot love
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,

Encouraged with a martyr's confidence; 274
Even files of strangers merely seen but once,

And for a moment, men from far with sound
Of music, martial tunes, and banners spread,

Entering the city, here and there a face,
Or person, singled out among the rest, 279

Yet still a stranger and beloved as such;
Even by these passing spectacles my heart

Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the
cause

Good, pure, which no one could stand up
against, 284

Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish, proud,
Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,
Already hinted at, of other mold —

A patriot, thence rejected by the rest, 290
And with an oriental loathing spurned,

As of a different caste. A meeker man
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,

Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries 294
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature

then
Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,

When foot hath crushed them. He through
the events

Of that great change wandered in perfect
faith, 299

As through a book, an old romance, or tale
Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought

Behind the summer clouds. By birth he
ranked

With the most noble, but unto the poor
Among mankind he was in service bound,

As by some tie invisible, oaths professed 305
To a religious order. Man he loved

As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,
And all the homely in their homely works,

Transferred a courtesy which had no air
Of condescension; but did rather seem 310

A passion and a gallantry, like that
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day

Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was,
Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,

But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy 315
Diffused around him, while he was intent

On works of love or freedom, or revolved
Complacently the progress of a cause,

Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek
And placid, and took nothing from the man

That was delightful. Oft in solitude 321
With him did I discourse about the end

Of civil government, and its wisest forms;
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,

Custom and habit, novelty and change; 325
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few

For patrimonial honor set apart,
And ignorance in the laboring multitude.

For he, to all intolerance indisposed, 329
Balanced these contemplations in his mind;

And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped
Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment

Than later days allowed; carried about me,
With less alloy to its integrity, 334

The experience of past ages, as, through help
Of books and common life, it makes sure way

To youthful minds, by objects over near
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled

By struggling with the crowd for present
ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find
Error without excuse upon the side 341

Of them who strove against us, more delight
We took, and let this freely be confessed,

In painting to ourselves the miseries
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life 345

Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul
The meanest thrives the most; where dignity,

True personal dignity, abideth not;
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off 349
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,

From lowly sympathy and chastening truth;
Where good and evil interchange their names,
And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired
With vice at home. We added dearest
themes —

Man and his noble nature, as it is 355
The gift which God has placed within his
power,

His blind desires and steady faculties
Capable of clear truth, the one to break
Bondage, the other to build liberty
On firm foundations, making social life, 360
Through knowledge spreading and imperish-
able,

As just in regulation, and as pure
As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honorable deeds
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright
spot, 365

That would be found in all recorded time,
Of truth preserved and error passed away;
Of single spirits that catch the flame from
Heaven,

And how the multitudes of men will feed
And fan each other; thought of sects, how
keen 370

They are to put the appropriate nature on,
Triumphant over every obstacle
Of custom, language, country, love, or hate,
And what they do and suffer for their creed;
How far they travel, and how long endure;
How quickly mighty Nations have been
formed, 376

From least beginnings; how, together locked
By new opinions, scattered tribes have made
One body, spreading wide as clouds in
heaven.

To aspirations then of our own minds — 380
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld

A living confirmation of the whole
Before us, in a people from the depth
Of shameful imbecility uprisen, 384
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,
And continence of mind, and sense of right,
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

? 1799.

From BOOK ELEVENTH

FRANCE (*concluded*)

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy! 105
For mighty were the auxiliars which then
stood

¹ These lines were originally published in Coleridge's
magazine, *The Friend*, with the title, *French Revolution*,
as it Appeared to Enthusiasts at its Commencement.

Upon our side, us who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven! — O
times,

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding
ways 110

Of custom, law, and statute took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her
rights,

When most intent on making of herself 114
A prime enchantress — to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her name!
Not favored spots alone, but the whole earth
The beauty wore of promise — that which
sets

(As at some moments might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of Paradise itself) 120

The budding rose above the rose full-blown.
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
They who had fed their childhood upon
dreams, 125

The playfellows of fancy, — who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength
Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had
stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found
there 130

As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it; — they, too, who of gentle mood
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers
more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful selves; —
Now was it that both found, the meek and
lofty 136

Did both find, helpers to their hearts' desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish;
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields, 140
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows
where!

But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us, — the place where, in the end,
We find our happiness, or not at all!

1805.

MY HEART LEAPS UP

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere." —
(Wordsworth.)

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,

So be it when I shall grow old 5
 Or let me die!
 The Child is father of the Man:
 And I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.¹

1802.

TO THE CUCKOO

"Composed in the orchard, Town-end,
 Grasmere." — (Wordsworth.)

O blithe New-comer! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
 Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass 5
 Thy twofold shout I hear,
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the vale,
 Of sunshine and of flowers, 10
 Thou bringest unto me a tale
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
 Even yet thou art to me
 No bird, but an invisible thing, 15
 A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
 I listened to; that cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways,
 In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove
 Through woods and on the green;
 And thou wert still a hope, a love;
 Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet; 25
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be
 An unsubstantial, faery place,
 That is fit home for thee!

1804.

RESOLUTION AND INDE- PENDENCE

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This old
 Man I met a few hundred yards from my cot-

¹ I.e. reverence for God as He appears in nature.

tage; and the account of him is taken from his
 own mouth. I was in the state of feeling de-
 scribed in the beginning of the poem; while
 crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's,
 at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The
 image of the hare I then observed on the ridge
 of the Fell." — (Wordsworth.)

There was a roaring in the wind all night;
 The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
 But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
 The birds are singing in the distant woods;
 Over his own sweet voice the stock-dove
 broods; 5

The jay makes answer as the magpie chatters;
 And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of
 waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
 The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
 The grass is bright with rain-drops; — on the
 moors 10

The hare is running races in her mirth;
 And with her feet she from the plashy earth
 Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,
 Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth
 run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor; 15
 I saw the hare that raced about with joy;
 I heard the woods and distant waters roar;
 Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
 The pleasant season did my heart employ:
 My old remembrances went from me
 wholly; 20
 And all the ways of men, so vain and melan-
 choly.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
 Of joy in minds that can no further go,
 As high as we have mounted in delight
 In our dejection do we sink as low; 25
 To me that morning did it happen so;
 And fears and fancies thick upon me came;
 Dim sadness, and blind thoughts, I knew not,
 nor could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky;
 And I bethought me of the playful hare: 30
 Even such a happy child of earth am I;
 Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;
 Far from the world I walk, and all from care;
 But there may come another day to me, —
 Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and pov-
 erty. 35

My whole life I have lived in pleasant
 thought,
 As if life's business were a summer mood;

As if all needful things would come unsought
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good;
 But how can he expect that others should 40
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed
 at all?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
 The sleepless soul that perished in his pride;
 Of him ¹ who walked in glory and in joy, 45
 Following his plough, along the mountain-
 side:

By our own spirits we are deified:
 We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
 But thereof come in the end despondency and
 madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace, 50
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts had
 striven,
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven,
 I saw a man before me unawares: 55
 The oldest man he seemed that ever wore
 gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
 Wonder to all who do the same espy,
 By what means it could thither come, and
 whence: 60
 So that it seems a thing endued with sense; —
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a
 shelf
 Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun
 itself; —

Such seemed this man, not all alive nor
 dead,
 Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age: 65
 His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage;
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
 A more than human weight upon his frame
 had cast. 70

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale
 face,
 Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood:
 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood
 Motionless as a cloud the old man stood, 75
 That heareth not the loud winds when they
 call,
 And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
 Upon that muddy water, which he conned,
 As if he had been reading in a book: 81
 And now a stranger's privilege I took;
 And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
 "This morning gives us promise of a glorious
 day."

A gentle answer did the old man make, 85
 In courteous speech which forth he slowly
 drew;

And him with further words I thus bespake:
 "What occupation do you there pursue?
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise 90
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid
 eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
 But each in solemn order followed each,
 With something of a lofty utterance drest, —
 Choice word and measured phrase, above the
 reach 95

Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
 Such as grave livers do in Scotland use,
 Religious men, who give to God and man
 their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come
 To gather leeches, being old and poor: 100
 Employment hazardous and wearisome!
 And he had many hardships to endure:
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to
 moor,
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice or
 chance;
 And in this way he gained an honest mainte-
 nance. 105

The old man still stood talking by my side;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard; nor word from word could I
 divide;
 And the whole body of the man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
 Or like a man from some far region sent, 111
 To give me human strength, by apt admon-
 ishment.

My former thoughts returned: the fear that
 kills
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
 Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills; 115
 And mighty poets in their misery dead.
 — Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
 My question eagerly did I renew,
 "How is it that you live, and what is it you
 do?"

He with a smile did then his words repeat; 120
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far and
 wide
 He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
 The waters of the pools where they abide.
 "Once I could meet with them on every side;
 But they have dwindled long by slow de-
 cay; 125
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I
 may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old man's shape, and speech, — all
 troubled me:

In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually, 130
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pur-
 sued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse
 renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind, 135
 But stately in the main; and when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn, to find
 In that decrepit man so firm a mind.
 "God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely
 moor!" 140

1802.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMIN- STER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This City now doth like a garment wear
 The beauty of the morning: silent, bare, 5
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples
 lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky, —
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill; 10
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
 The river glideth at his own sweet will:
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

1802.

COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

Fair Star of evening, Splendor of the west,
 Star of my Country! — on the horizon's brink
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink

On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest 5
 Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
 Should'st be my Country's emblem; and
 should'st wink,

Bright Star! with laughter on her banners,
 drest

In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
 Beneath thee, that is England; there she
 lies. 10

Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
 One life, one glory! — I, with many a fear
 For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
 Among men who do not love her, linger here.

1802.

IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING CALM AND FREE

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the
 Sea: 5

Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder — everlastingly.
 Dear Child! ¹ dear Girl! that walkest with me
 here,

If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine: 11
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

1802.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC ²

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee
 And was the safeguard of the West; the
 worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
 Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden city, bright and free; 5
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;
 And when she took unto herself a mate,
 She must espouse ³ the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength de-
 cay, — 10

Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final day:

¹ Wordsworth's French daughter, Caroline.

² By Napoleon, in 1797.

³ Referring to the annual ceremony when the Doge of Venice married the Adriatic by tossing a ring into its waters.

Men are we, and must grieve when even the
 shade
 Of that which once was great is passed away.
 1802.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE¹

Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless
 den; —

O miserable Chieftain! where and when 5
 Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do
 thou

Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left
 behind

Powers that will work for thee; air, earth,
 and skies; 10

There's not a breathing of the common wind
 That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

1802.

NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER

1802

Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood;
 And saw, while sea was calm and air was
 clear,

The coast of France — the coast of France
 how near!

Drawn almost into frightful neighborhood.

I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood 5
 Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
 A span of waters; yet what power is there!
 What mightiness for evil and for good!

Even so doth God protect us if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters
 roll, 10

Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;
 Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

1802

WRITTEN IN LONDON, 1802

"This was written immediately after my re-
 turn from France to London, when I could not
 but be struck, as here described, with the vanity
 and parade of our own country, especially in

¹ The Haitian general, son of African slaves, who abolished slavery on the island of Santo Domingo. After a successful resistance to the French, he was captured in 1801 and imprisoned in Paris, where he died the following year, shortly after Wordsworth's sonnet was written.

great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was may be found in my Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets." — (Wordsworth.)

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed
 To think that now our life is only drest

For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,
 cook,

Or groom! — We must run glittering like a
 brook 5

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
 The wealthiest man among us is the best.

No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,

This is idolatry; and these we adore: 10
 Plain living and high thinking are no more:

The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
 England hath need of thee: she is a fen

Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower 5
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:

Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the

sea, 10

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
 So didst thou travel on life's common way
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

TO THE DAISY

"Composed in the orchard, Town-end,
 Grasmere." — (Wordsworth.)

With little here to do or see
 Of things that in the great world be,

Sweet Daisy! oft I talk to thee
 For thou art worthy,
 Thou unassuming Common-place
 Of Nature, with that homely face,
 And yet with something of a grace
 Which Love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
 I sit and play with similes,
 Loose types of things through all degrees,
 Thoughts of thy raising;
 And many a fond and idle name
 I give to thee, for praise or blame
 As is the humor of the game,
 While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port;
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
 In thy simplicity the sport
 Of all temptations;
 A queen in crown of rubies drest;
 A starveling in a scanty vest;
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
 Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
 Staring to threaten and defy,
 That thought comes next — and instantly
 The freak is over,
 The shape will vanish, and behold!
 A silver shield with boss of gold
 That spreads itself, some faery bold
 In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar —
 And then thou art a pretty star,
 Not quite so fair as many are
 In heaven above thee!
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest; —
 May peace come never to his nest
 Who shall reprove thee!

Sweet Flower! for by that name at last
 When all my reveries are past
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent Creature!
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature!

1802.

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY

When I have borne in memory what has
 tamed
 Great nations; how ennobling thoughts depart

When men change swords for ledgers, and
 desert
 The student's bower for gold, — some fears
 unnamed
 I had, my Country! — am I to be blamed?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou
 art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
 And I by my affection was beguiled:
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

1802.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

"For illustration, see my Sister's Journal."
 — (Wordsworth.)

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold:
 As vapors breathed from dungeons cold,
 Strike pleasure dead,
 So sadness comes from out the mould
 Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
 And thou forbidden to appear?
 As if it were thyself that's here
 I shrink with pain;
 And both my wishes and my fear
 Alike are vain.

Off weight — nor press on weight! — away
 Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to
 stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay
 The tribute due
 To him, and aught that hides his clay
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
 He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
 Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
 Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
 The struggling heart, where be they now?
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,

Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
And silent grave. 30

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne 35
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends, —
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw¹ seen, — 40
Neighbors we were, and loving friends
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined, 45
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;
Thou "poor Inhabitant below," 50
At this dread moment — even so —
Might we together
Have sat and talked where gowans² blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been
placed 55

Within my reach; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast!

But why go on? —
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown. 60

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight!
Yet one to which is not denied 65
Some sad delight:

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harbored where none can be misled,
Wronged, or distressed; 70
And surely here it may be said
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place 75
Where Man is laid

Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear, 80
Music that sorrow comes not near,
A ritual hymn,
Chaunted in love that casts out fear
By Seraphim.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

This and the preceding poem were written in
Scotland during the tour that Wordsworth made
with his sister and Coleridge.

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain, 5
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands 10
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas 15
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago: 20
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang 25
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; —
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill, 30
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

1803.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

'Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The
germ of this poem was four lines composed as a
part of the verse on the Highland Girl. Though

¹ A mountain in Cumberland, not far from Scotland.
² daisies.

beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious." — (Wordsworth.)

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light.

1804.

I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves." — (Wordsworth.)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:

Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

1804.

ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE
IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR
GEORGE BEAUMONT

"Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures of this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs. Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it; but Lady Beaumont interfered, and after Sir George's death she gave it to Sir Uvedale Price, in whose house at Foxley I have seen it." — (Wordsworth.)

I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no
sleep;

No mood, which season takes away, or
brings:

I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! then, if mine had been the Painter's
hand,

To express what then I saw; and add the
gleam,

The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house
divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven; —
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine,
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease, 25
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have
made: 30

And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 'tis so no
more;

I have submitted to a new control;
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul. 36

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind
serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, friend! who would have
been the friend,

If he had lived, of him¹ whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but com-
mend;

This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

Oh, 'tis a passionate work! — yet wise and
well, 45

Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time, 51
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling
waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the
kind!

Such happiness, wherever it be known, 55
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!

¹ Wordsworth's brother John, a sea-captain, who was
lost with his ship in 1805.

Such sights, or worse, as are before me
here.

Not without hope we suffer and we mourn. 60
1805.

ODE TO DUTY

"This ode is on the model of Gray's Ode to
Adversity, which is copied from Horace's Ode
to Fortune. Many and many a time have I
been twitted by my wife and sister for having
forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern
lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been,
from hour to hour, from day to day: I would
fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a
worse way than most of my tuneful brethren.
But these last words are in a wrong strain. We
should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing,
if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make
comparisons at all, it ought to be with those
who have morally excelled us.

"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo per-
ductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim, sed
nisi recte facere non possim." — (Wordsworth.)

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law 5
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail human-
ity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth 10
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced 15
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power!
around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security. 20
And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to
their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried, 25
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30

The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if
I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control, 35
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tides;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name;
I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds, 45
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through
Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend 50
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
O let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give; 55
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me
live.

1805.

TO A SKYLARK

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing, 5
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary;
Had I now the wings of a Faery, 10
Up to thee would I fly.
There is madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine;
Lift me, guide me high and high
To thy banqueting-place in the sky. 15

Joyous as morning,
Thou art laughing and scorning;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark! thou wouldst be loth 20

To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both! 25

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must
wind;
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
I, with my fate contented, will plod on, 30
And hope for higher raptures, when life's day
is done.

1805.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

"The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honor of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His mess-mates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that, the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound." — (Wordsworth.)

In the above lines Wordsworth has given his account of the genesis of the poem. His happy warrior, however, is not a military man in the narrow sense of the word. He is not a Nelson or a Wellington, but rather Wordsworth himself or his brother John. Note in the poem

the recurrence of some of Wordworth's favorite themes: the glories of childhood; nature and intuition as sources of wisdom; the insistence upon duty, especially in keeping to a trust or to a "law in calmness made"; and the emphasis upon moral goodness, simplicity, gentleness, and faith.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
— It is the generous spirit, who, when
brought

Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish
thought:

Whose high endeavors are an inward light
That makes the path before him always
bright:

Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to
learn;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with pain,
And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;

In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, be-
reaves

Of their bad influence, and their good re-
ceives:

By objects, which might force the soul to
abate

Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable, — because occasions rise
So often that demands such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more
pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness:
— 'Tis he whose law is reason; who de-
pends

Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted
still

To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest;
He labors good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:

— Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the
same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;

And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in
wait

For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow, on whose head
must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common
strife,

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has
joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the
law

In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,

Come when it will, is equal to the need:

— He who, though thus endued as with a
sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity

It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to
love: —

'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,

Or left unthought of in obscurity, —
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be
won:

Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand
fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpass:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the
earth

Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead, unprofitable name,
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering,
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's ap-
plause, —

This is the happy Warrior; this is he
That every man in arms should wish to be.

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD

"This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere —

'A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death!' —

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that *my* difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines —

'Obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;' etc.

To that dream-like vividness and splendor which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here: but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of Man presents an analogy in its favor. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations; and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he

could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the 'Immortality of the Soul,' I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet.

'The Child is Father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.'

(Wordsworth.)

There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,

The earth, and every common sight

To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,

The glory and the freshness of a dream. 5

It is not now as it hath been of yore; —

Turn wheresoe'er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can see
no more.

The rainbow comes and goes, 10

And lovely is the rose;

The moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are
bare;

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair; 15

The sunshine is a glorious birth;

But yet I know, where'er I go,

That there hath past away a glory from the
earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,

And while the young lambs bound 20

As to the tabor's sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief:

A timely utterance gave that thought relief,

And I again am strong.

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the
steep; — 25

No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:

I hear the echoes through the mountains
throng,

The winds come to me from the fields of
sleep,

And all the earth is gay;

Land and sea 30

Give themselves up to jollity,

And with the heart of May

Doth every beast keep holiday; —

Thou child of joy,

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou
happy

Shepherd-boy!

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival, 40
 My head hath its coronal,

The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
 Oh evil day! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning
 This sweet May-morning; 45
 And the children are culling
 On every side
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines
 warm

And the babe leaps up on his mother's
 arm: — 50
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 — But there's a tree, of many, one,
 A single field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is
 gone:

The pansy at my feet 55
 Doth the same tale repeat:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star, 60
 Hath had elsewhere its setting
 And cometh from afar;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come 65
 From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But he beholds the light, and whence it
 flows, 70

He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended; 75

At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her
 own;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a mother's
 mind 80

And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
 To make her foster-child, her inmate, Man,
 Forget the glories he hath
 known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came. 85

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he
 lies,

Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's
 eyes! 90

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human
 life,

Shaped by himself with newly-learnéd art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral; 95

And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long 100
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride

The little actor cons another part;
 Filling from time to time his "humorous
 stage"

With all the Persons, down to palsied Age, 105
 That life brings with her in her equipage;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity; 110

Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal
 deep,

Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind, —
 Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest

Which we are toiling all our lives to find, 117
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave, 120
 A Presence which is not to be put by;
 Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born, freedom on thy being's
 height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou pro-
 voke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke, 125
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly
 freight,

And custom lie upon thee with a weight
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers 130
 Is something that doth live,
 That Nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed 135
 For that which is most worthy to be blest,
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his
 breast: —

— Not for these I raise 140

The song of thanks and praise;

But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings;

Blank misgivings of a creature 145

Moving about in worlds not realized,

High instincts, before which our mortal
 nature

Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections, 150

Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,

Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to
 make

Our noisy years 'seem moments in the
 being 155

Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

To perish never;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-
 deavor,

Nor man nor boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy, 160

Can utterly abolish or destroy!

Hence, in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither; 165

Can in a moment travel thither —

And see the children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!

And let the young lambs bound 170

As to the tabor's sound!

We, in thought, will join your throng

Ye that pipe and ye that play,

Ye that through your hearts to-day

Feel the gladness of the May! 175

What though the radiance which was once
 so bright

Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the
 hour

Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the
 flower; 179

We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains be-
 hind;

In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever
 be;

In the soothing thoughts that
 spring

Out of human suffering; 185

In the faith that looks through
 death,

In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and
 Groves,

Forbode not any severing of our loves!

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your
 might; 190

I only have relinquished one delight

To live beneath your more habitual sway:

I love the brooks which down their channels
 fret

Even more than when I tripped lightly as
 they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born day

Is lovely yet; 196

The clouds that gather round the setting sun

Do take a sober coloring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;

Another race hath been, and other palms are
 won. 200

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can
 give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

1802-06.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our
 powers:

Little we see in Nature that is ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid
 boon!

The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon; 5

The winds that will be howling at all hours

And are up-gathered now like sleeping
 flowers;

For this, for every thing, we are out of tune;

It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn, — 10

So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,

Have glimpses that would make me less for-
 lorn;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;

Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn,

1806.

SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE

UPON THE RESTORATION ¹ OF LORD CLIFFORD,²
THE SHEPHERD, TO THE STATES AND
HONORS OF HIS ANCESTORS

"This poem was composed at Coleorton while I was walking to and fro along the path that led from Sir George Beaumont's Farm-house, where we resided, to the Hall which was building at that time." — (Wordsworth.)

High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
And Emont's murmur mingled with the
Song. —

The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent long: —
"From town to town, from tower to tower, ⁵
The red rose ³ is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The red rose is revived at last;
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming: ¹⁰
Both roses flourish, red and white: ⁴
In love and sisterly delight
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended. —
Joy! joy to both! but most to her ¹⁵
Who is the flower of Lancaster!
Behold her how She smiles to-day
On this great throng, this bright array!
Fair greeting doth she send to all
From every corner of the hall; ²⁰
But chiefly from above the board
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
A Clifford to his own restored!

They came with banner, spear, and shield,
And it was proved in Bosworth-field. ²⁵
Not long the Avenger was withstood, —
Earth helped him with the cry of blood:
St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth, ³⁰
We loudest in the faithful North:
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming;
Our strong-abodes and castles see
The glory of their loyalty. ³⁵

How glad is Skipton at this hour —
Though lonely, a deserted Tower;
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and
groom:

We have them at the feast of Brough'm.

¹ When Henry VII became king.
² He was forced to flee by the Yorkists during the War of the Roses, and for twenty-four years lived, deprived of his estates, as a shepherd.
³ The symbol or badge of the house of Lancaster.
⁴ i.e. the house of York.
⁵ Scene of the last battle in the War of the Roses, where Richard III was overthrown in 1485.

How glad Pendragon — though the sleep ⁴⁰
Of years be on her! — She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream; ⁴⁵
And she that keepeth watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely Tower: —
But here is perfect joy and pride ⁵⁰
For one fair House by Emont's side,
This day, distinguished without peer
To see her Master and to cheer —
Him, and his Lady-mother dear!

Oh! it was a time forlorn ⁵⁵
When the fatherless was born —
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die!
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the Mother and the Child. ⁶⁰
Who will take them from the light?
— Yonder is a man in sight —
Yonder is a house — but where?
No, they must not enter there.
To the caves, and to the brooks, ⁶⁵
To the clouds of heaven she looks;
She is speechless, but her eyes
Pray in ghostly agonies.
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
Maid and Mother undefiled, ⁷⁰
Save a Mother and her Child!

Now who is he that bounds with joy
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that
pass
Light as the wind along the grass. ⁷⁵
Can this be He who hither came
In secret, like a smothered flame?
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed
For shelter, and a poor man's bread!
God loves the Child; and God hath willed ⁸⁰
That those dear words should be fulfilled,
The Lady's words, when forced away,
The last she to her Babe did say:
'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
I may not be; but rest thee, rest, ⁸⁵
For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

Alas! when evil men are strong
No life is good, no pleasure long.
The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves, ⁹⁰
And quit the flowers that summer brings
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;
Must vanish, and his careless cheer
Be turned to heaviness and fear.
— Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise! ⁹⁵
Hear it, good man, old in days!

Thou tree of covert and of rest
 For this young Bird that is distrest;
 Among thy branches safe he lay,
 And he was free to sport and play, 100
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear!
 I said, when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long, 105
 A weak and cowardly untruth!
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
 And thankful through a weary time,
 That brought him up to manhood's
 prime.

— Again he wanders forth at will, 110
 And tends a flock from hill to hill:
 His garb is humble; ne'er was seen
 Such garb with such a noble mien;
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state!
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee, 116
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.

To his side the fallow-deer
 Came, and rested without fear;
 The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120
 Stooped down to pay him fealty;
 And both the undying fish that swim
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;
 The pair were servants of his eye
 In their immortality; 125

And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
 Upon the mountains visitant;
 He hath kenned them taking wing: 130
 And into caves where Faeries sing
 He hath entered; and been told
 By Voices how men lived of old.
 Among the heavens his eye can see
 The face of thing that is to be; 135
 And, if that men report him right,
 His tongue could whisper words of might.

— Now another day is come,
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom;
 He hath thrown aside his crook, 140
 And hath buried deep his book;
 Armor rusting in his halls
 On the blood of Clifford calls: —
 'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance —
 Bear me to the heart of France, 145
 Is the longing of the Shield —
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;
 Field of death, where'er thou be,
 Groan thou with our victory!

Happy day, and mighty hour, 150
 When our Shepherd, in his power,
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
 To his ancestors restored

Like a re-appearing Star,
 Like a glory from afar, 155
 First shall head the flock of war!

Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not know
 How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's heart
 was framed,

How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and
 tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men
 lie;

His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
 The silence that is in the starry sky,
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race, 165
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were
 dead:

Nor did he change; but kept in lofty place
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage
 hearth;

The Shepherd-lord was honored more and
 more; 170

And, ages after he was laid in earth,
 "The good Lord Clifford" was the name he
 bore.

1807.

LAODAMIA

"Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of
 the trees growing and withering put the subject
 into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of
 giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know,
 has been given to it by any of the Ancients who
 have treated of it. It cost me more trouble
 than almost anything of equal length I have
 ever written." — (Wordsworth.)

"With sacrifice before the rising morn
 Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
 And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades for-
 lorn

Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I re-
 quired:

Celestial pity I again implore; — 5
 Restore him to my sight — great Jove,
 restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
 With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts
 her hands;

While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
 Her countenance brightens — and her eye
 expands; 10

Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature
grows;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? — O joy!
What doth she look on? — whom doth she
behold?

Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy? 15
His vital presence? his corporeal mold?
It is — if sense deceive her not — 'tis He!
And a God leads him, winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake — and touched her with
his wand

That calms all fear: "Such grace hath
crowned thy prayer," 20

Laodamía! that at Jove's command
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper
air:

He comes to tarry with thee three hours'
space;

Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord
to clasp; 25

Again that consummation she essayed;
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.

The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight. 30

"Protesiláus, lo! thy guide is gone!
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:
This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will
rejoice.

Not to appal me have the gods bestowed 35
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamía! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect: — Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;
But in reward of thy fidelity. 40
And something also did my worth obtain;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain..

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle fore-
told

That the first Greek who touched the Trojan
strand

Should die; but me the threat could not
withhold: 45

A generous cause a victim did demand;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;
A self-devoted chief — by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best!
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more, 50

Which then, when tens of thousands were
deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;
Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here
thou art —

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest
deed, 55

Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;
And he, whose power restores thee, hath
decreed

Thou should'st elude the malice of the grave:
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian
air. 60

"No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow
this;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my
side!

Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial
kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious
Parcæ¹ threw 65

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:
Nor should the change be mourned, even if
the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth de-
stroys 70

Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains:
Calm pleasures there abide — majestic
pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul; 75
A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn — "

"Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by
force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the
tomb 80

Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal
bloom?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful — and they 85
Yet further may relent: for mightier far

Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favorite seat be feeble
woman's breast. 90

"But if thou goest, I follow —" "Peace!" he
said; —

She looked upon him and was calmed and
cheered;

The ghastly color from his lips had fled;
In his deportment, shape, and mien, ap-
peared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace, 95
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
Spake of heroic acts in graver mood 101
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air, 105
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the bright-
est day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath
earned

That privilege by virtue. — "Ill," said he, 110
"The end of man's existence I discerned,

Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain de-
light,

While tears were thy best pastime, day and
night;

"And while my youthful peers before my
eyes 115

(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given: — I then
revolved 121

The oracle, upon the silent sea;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
The foremost prow in pressing to the
strand, — 125

Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan
sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife!
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life, —
The paths which we had trod — these foun-
tains, flowers, — 131
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,
'Behold they tremble! — haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die?' 135
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred: — but lofty
thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all too
weak

In reason, in self-government too slow; 140
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympa-
thized;

Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to as-
cend — 145

Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven —
That self might be annulled: her bondage
prove

The fetters of a dream, opposed to
love." — 150

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-appears!
Round the dear Shade she would have clung,
— 'tis vain:

The hours are past — too brief had they been
years;

And him no mortal effort can detain:
Swift, toward the realms that know not
earthly day, 155

He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods, whom no weak pity
moved, 160

Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

— Yet tears to human suffering are due;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
Are mourned by man, and not by man
alone, 166

As fondly he believes. — Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she
died; 170

And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight;
A constant interchange of growth and blight.¹

1814.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVEN- ING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR AND BEAUTY

"Felt and in a great measure composed upon
the little mount in front of our abode at Rydal."
— (Wordsworth.)

I

Had this effulgence disappeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,
Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of blank astonishment;
But 'tis endued with power to stay, 5
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see —
What is? — ah no, but what *can* be!
Time was when field and watery cove 10
With modulated echoes rang,
While choirs of fervent Angels sang
Their vespers in the grove;
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign
height,
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite, 15
Methinks, if audibly repeated now
From hill or valley, could not move
Sublimar transport, purer love,
Than doth this silent spectacle — the
gleam —
The shadow — and the peace supreme! 20

2

No sound is uttered, — but a deep
And solemn harmony pervades
The hollow vale from steep to steep,
And penetrates the glades.
Far-distant images draw nigh, 25
Called forth by wondrous potency
Of beamy radiance, that imbues,
Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues!

¹ For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44; and for the features in the character of Proteus see the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,

" — His Laodamia,

It comes —" (Wordsworth.)

In vision exquisitely clear,
Herds range along the mountain side; 30
And glistening antlers are descried;
And gilded flocks appear.
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve!
But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe 35
That this magnificence is wholly thine!
— From worlds not quickened by the sun
A portion of the gift is won;
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
On ground which British shepherds tread! 40

3

And, if there be whom broken ties
Afflict, or injuries assail,
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
Present a glorious scale,
Climbing suffused with sunny air, 45
To stop — no record hath told where!
And tempting Fancy to ascend,
And with immortal Spirits blend!
— Wings at my shoulders seem to play;
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze 50
On those bright steps that heavenward raise
Their practicable way.
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look
abroad,
And see to what fair countries ye are bound!
And if some traveller, weary of his road, 55
Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy
ground
Ye Genii! to his covert speed;
And wake him with such gentle heed
As may attune his soul to meet the dower
Bestowed on this transcendent hour! 60

4

Such hues from their celestial Urn
Were wont to stream before mine eye,
Where'er it wandered in the morn
Of blissful infancy.
This glimpse of glory, why renewed? 65
Nay, rather speak with gratitude;
For, if a vestige of those gleams
Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
Dread Power! whom peace and calmness
serve
No less than Nature's threatening voice, 70
If aught unworthy be my choice,
From THEE if I would swerve;
Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
Which, at this moment, on my waking
sight 75

Appears to shine, by miracle restored;
My soul, though yet confined to earth,
Rejoices in a second birth!

— 'Tis past, the visionary splendor fades;
And night approaches with her shades. 80
1818.

MUTABILITY¹

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sink from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with
crime, 5
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that
bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, which royally did wear 11
His crown of weeds, but could not even sus-
tain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.
1821.

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE¹

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect who
planned
(Albeit laboring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence! 5
— Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects
the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more: —
So deemed the man who fashioned for the
sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching
roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand
cells 10
Where light and shade repose, where music
dwells
Lingering — and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth
proof
That they were born for immortality.
1821.

THE TROSACHS

"As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had
first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's
company. The sentiment that runs through
this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I
saw again this beautiful spot; but this and some 15

other sonnets that follow were colored by the
remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter
Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he
was going." — (Wordsworth.)

There's not a nook within this solemn Pass,
But were an apt confessional for One
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn
gone,
That Life is but a tale of morning grass
Withered at eve. From scenes of art which
chase 5
That thought away, turn, and with watchful
eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear
than glass
Untouched, unbreathed upon: — Thrice
happy quest,
If from a golden perch of aspen spray 10
(October's workmanship to rival May),
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!
1831.

PREFACE TO LYRICAL BALLADS

1800

The discussion aroused by *Lyrical Ballads* on
its first publication led Wordsworth to add a
preface to the second edition in 1800, which he
continued to revise until it received its final
form in 1845. In it he attacks the false and ar-
tificial conventions to which poetry had been
submitted, and expounds his own theories of
poetic art. These theories are discussed with
critical insight by Coleridge in *Biographia Li-
teraria*, Chapters 14, 17, and 18. Standing at
the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, as
forerunner of the new poetry, the preface is one
of the most important documents in English
criticism.

The first Volume of these Poems has al-
ready been submitted to general perusal.
It was published as an experiment, which, I
hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how
far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a
selection of the real language of men in a state
of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and
that quantity of pleasure may be imparted,
which a Poet may rationally endeavor to
10 impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate
of the probable effect of those Poems: I flat-
tered myself that they who should be pleased
with them would read them with more than
common pleasure; and, on the other hand, I
was well aware, that by those who should dis-

¹ From the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*.

like them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be some impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shake-

spere and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonorable accusations which can be brought against an Author, namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavoring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect, and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings;

and from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appears to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust), because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation.¹

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonorable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a

man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavor to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary

¹ It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day. (Wordsworth.)

incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse. — When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavor made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonorable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguishing success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavored utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near

to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavored to look steadily at my subject; consequently there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense; but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose

and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire:
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to poetry; and it was previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters; but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing in degree; Poetry sheds no tears "such as angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical

1 I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a strict antithesis; because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable. (Wordsworth.)

arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of Prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendor of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have effect if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labor is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever may be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be

far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him? — He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves; — whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But, whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for

short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavors occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, that of the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being pos-

sessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially

adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting qualities of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labor and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and inalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs, in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favorite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge — it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper

objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man. — It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavor to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What I have thus far said applies to Poetry in general; but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorize the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are colored by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description which I have before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly

with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what I have already said, I reply, in the first

place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me — to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colors of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly under-rate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a more naked and simple style than I have aimed at, which poems have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished chiefly to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state,

succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless, yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of the distressful parts of *Clarissa Harlowe*, or *The Gamester*; while Shakespeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure — an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement. — On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin; it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude, are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language

closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely — all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is necessary to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavored to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to

repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and becomes utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the Reader ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:

"I put my hat upon my head
And walked into the Strand,
And there I met another man
Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines I will place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the "Babes in the Wood."

"These pretty Babes with hand in hand
Went wandering up and down;
But never more they saw the Man
Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "The Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can lead to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such

verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide independently by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an accurate taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself), but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavored to recommend: for the Reader will say that he

has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honorable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them; we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have

been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained, and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining; and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772-1834)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, youngest son of the rector of Ottery St. Mary's in Devonshire, was born October 21, 1772. Left dependent by the death of his father, he was sent by his relatives to Christ's Hospital in London, where his forlorn state is described by Charles Lamb in his essay, *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*. Thence he went to Jesus College, Cambridge. He was in sympathy with the radical ideas of the time which found expression in the French Revolution; and with a young Oxford student, Robert Southey, who held similar views, he planned a settlement to be carried out on the banks of the Susquehanna. He and Southey married sisters, Sara and Edith Fricker, and with increasing responsibilities they gradually dropped this Utopian scheme. Coleridge became a Unitarian preacher, in which capacity he came to Wem where lived William Hazlitt, who has described their meeting in *First Acquaintance with Poets*. He went to live at Nether Stowey, a village in southern England, and Wordsworth with his sister Dorothy took a house at Alfoxden, near by. The association of the three in 1797-98 resulted in the volume *Lyrical Ballads*, to which Coleridge contributed his most famous poem, *The Ancient Mariner*. The next year they all went to Germany, where Coleridge became acquainted with German philosophy. Subsequently Coleridge settled his family at Keswick, in the Lake Country, to be near the Wordsworths, but he spent little time there, being much in London, engaged in journalism and lecturing. He became addicted to the use of opium, and his literary production thenceforth was merely a series of splendid plans with fragmentary performance. While in Keswick, in 1809, he undertook to publish a magazine of philosophy and politics, called *The Friend*. In 1816 he went to live at Highgate in the family of a physician, James Gillman, where he spent the long evening of his life. He continued to be a strong influence on young men of the time, upholding his philosophic view of a spiritual as opposed to a material or mechanistic universe. He died in 1834.

Coleridge was the scholar and philosopher among the romantic poets. He took all knowledge as his province, and expounded his ideas, with much influence, to his contemporaries, whether the subject was religion, or politics, or the arts. He brought German philosophy and literature to England. Under the influence of Goethe and especially of Lessing, he developed a philosophy of literary criticism which produced the stimulating lectures on Shakespeare and the magnificent *Biographia Literaria* (1817), chaotic though it be in execution.

Coleridge's actual achievement, in both prose and verse, seldom measured up to his capabilities. Yet his work is great enough to place him in the front rank. His prose, always weighted with

thought, is vigorous and stately. As a poet, he was the apostle of beauty, which he attained through his subtle supernaturalism and the haunting music of his lines.

The great influence of Coleridge upon his own times, however, came from his personality and from his conversation. What his informal talk was like may be gathered from the following description set down in 1817: "Standing in front of the chimney upon which he leaned back, with head erect and arms crossed, his dreamy eyes lost in abstractions, transported by the inspirations of his own genius, he seemed to be addressing not the auditors, but replying to his own thoughts. . . . Surrounded by a circle who enkindled the enthusiasm which was transmitted in full power in return, he went on with an erudite and masterly analysis of the dramatic poets of Greece. . . . Reaching Leibnitz, he followed that great philosopher over the bridge of communication which he extended from earth to heaven. Leibnitz led to Spinoza. We heard him with the ardent glow of genius refute the impalpable pantheism of Spinoza, who gave a soul to the universe without individuality, and motion to matter without a mover. In the mazes of these metaphysical speculations, the poetic genius of Coleridge would flow on, or disport in circles like the harmonious and luminous ocean. From the refutation of Spinoza, . . . he proceeded in beautiful and sublime strains to illustrate the tenets and principles of religion, till, reached to the summit, where he could advance no farther or higher, he bowed himself in humility and reverence to the earth." (Chasles)

The standard edition of Coleridge's works is that of W. G. T. Shedd, 1884. The *Biographia Literaria* is edited by J. Shawcross, Clarendon Press, 1907. A convenient edition is that in Everyman's Library. There are biographies by J. D. Campbell, 1894, and H. D. Traill in the English Men of Letters. A recent study of Coleridge by Hugh d'Anson Fausset is especially recommended.

KUBLA KHAN; OR, A VISION IN A DREAM

A FRAGMENT

The following fragment is here published at the request of a poet of great and deserved celebrity,¹ and, as far as the Author's own opinions are concerned, rather as a psychological curiosity, than on the ground of any supposed poetic merits.

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchas's Pilgrimage*:—"Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and

mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm
Is broken — all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes —
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.²

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. Ἀβριον ἄδιον ἄσω' but the to-morrow is yet to come. . . . — (Coleridge.)

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan²
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea. 5
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous
rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing
tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

¹ From Coleridge's *The Picture; or, The Lover's Resolution*.

² For remarkable word-music and imagery this poem stands in the very first rank.

¹ Presumably Byron.

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device, 35
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played, 40
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me,
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long, 45
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair! 50
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

For a detailed account of the genesis of the poem, see J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu* (Houghton Mifflin Company).

ARGUMENT

PART I

I immediately.

"The sun came up upon the
left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the
right
Went down into the sea.

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till it
reached the
Line.

"Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon —"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the
hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her
goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-
Guest heareth
the bridal
music; but
the Mariner
continueth
his tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"And now the 'Storm-blast'
came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

The ship
driven by a
storm toward
the south pole.

"With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

"And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

"And through the drifts the
snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts
we ken —
The ice was all between.

The land of
ice, and of
fearful sounds
where no liv-
ing thing was
to be seen.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and
howled,
Like noises in a swound!

"At length did cross an Alba-
tross,
Thorough the fog it came;

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
Albatross,

As if it had been a Christian
soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

came through
the snow-log,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

"It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!"

"And a good south wind sprung
up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!"

And lo! the
Albatross
proveth a bird
of good omen,
and followeth
the ship as it
returned
northward
through fog
and floating
ice.

"In mist or cloud, on mast or
shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke
white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

"God save thee, ancient Mar-
iner!
From the fiends, that plague thee
thus! —
Why look'st thou so?" — "With
my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross!"

The ancient
Mariner
inhabitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!"

"And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the
bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!"

His shipmates
cry out against
the ancient
Mariner, for
killing the bird
of good luck.

"Nor dim nor red, like God's
own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed
the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

But when the
fog cleared off
they justify
the same, and
thus make
themselves ac-
complices in
the crime.

• rope running to the masthead.

"The fair breeze blew, the white
foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever
burst
Into that silent sea.

The fair breeze
continues; the
ship enters the
Pacific Ocean,
and sails north-
ward, even till
it reaches the
Line.

"Down dropt the breeze, the
sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

The ship hath
been suddenly
becalm'd.

"All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

"Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did
shrink;

And the Alba-
tross begins to
be avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

"The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

"About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

A Spirit had
followed them;
one of the in-
visible inhab-
itants of this
planet, neither
departed souls
nor angels;
concerning
whom the
learned Jew,
Josephus, and
the Platonic
Constantino-
politan, Mi-
chael Pselius,
may be con-
sulted. They
are very num-
erous, and
there is no cli-
mate or ele-
ment without
one or more.

"And some in dreams assured
were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had fol-
lowed us
From the land of mist and snow.

"And every tongue, through
utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more
than if
We had been choked with soot.

"Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Alba-
tross
About my neck was hung.

The shipmates,
in their sore
distress, would
fain throw the
whole guilt on
the ancient
Mariner: in
sign whereof
they hang the
dead sea-bird
round his
neck.

PART III

"There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I be-
held
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a sign
in the ele-
ment afar off.

"At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist."

"A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

"With throats unslaked, with
black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all
dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the
blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him
to be a ship;
and at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech from
the bonds of
thirst.

"With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath
drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of
joy;

"See! see! (I cried) she tacks
no more!
Hither to work us weal, —
Without a breeze, without a
tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

And horror
follows. For
can it be a ship
that comes
onward with-
out wind or
tide?

"The western wave was all aflame,
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove sud-
denly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

"And straight the Sun was
flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us
grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth
him but the
skeleton of a
ship.

I *ywis*, certainly.

"Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat
loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?"

"Are those her ribs through
which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there
two?
Is Death that woman's mate?"

And its ribs are
seen as bars on
the face of the
setting Sun.

The Spectre-
Woman and
her Death-
mate, and no
other on board
the skeleton-
ship.

"Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190
Her locks were yellow as gold: 185
Her skin was as white as lep-
rosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Like vessel,
like crew!

"The naked hulk alongside 195
came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won!
I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice."

Death and
Life-in-Death
have diced for
the ship's
crew, and she
(the latter)
winneeth the
ancient Mariner.

"The Sun's rim dips; the stars
rush out:
At one stride comes the dark; 200
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
Sun.

"We listened and looked side-
ways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip! 205
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed
white;
From the sails the dew did drip —
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star 210
Within the nether tip.

At the rising
of the Moon,

"One after one, by the star-
dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye. 215

One after
another,

"Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

His shipmates
drop down
dead.

I A popular number in the old ballads and in folk-
tales.

"The souls did from their
bodies fly, — 220
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
Mariner.

PART IV

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner! 225
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank,
and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

The Wedding-
Guest feareth
that a Spirit is
talking to him;

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown." —
"Fear not, fear not, thou Wed-
ding-Guest! 230
This body dropt not down.

But the an-
cient Mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to re-
late his horri-
ble penance.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony. 235

"The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I. 239

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

"I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust. 245

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky 250
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

"The cold sweat melted from
their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on
me 255
Had never passed away.

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than
that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
In his loneli-
ness and fixed-
ness he yearn-
eth towards
the journey-

Seven days, seven nights, I saw
that curse, 261
And yet I could not die.

"The moving Moon went up the
sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up, 265
And a star or two beside —

"Her beams bemooked the sul-
try main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge
shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red. 271

"Beyond the shadow of the
ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining
white,
And when they reared, the elfish light 275
Fell off in hoary flakes.

"Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every
track 280
Was a flash of golden fire.

"O happy living things! no
tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware; 286
Sure my kind saint took pity on
me,
And I blessed them unaware. 286

"The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank 290
Like lead into the sea."

PART V

"Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, 295
That slid into my soul.

"The silly buckets on the
deck,
That had so long remained,
1 empty. 300

I dreamt that they were filled
with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained. 300

"My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

"I moved, and could not feel my limbs: 305
I was so light — almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

"And soon I heard a roaring
wind:
It did not come anear; 310
But with its sound it shook the
sails,
That were so thin and sere.

"The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about! 315
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

"And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black
cloud; 320
The Moon was at its edge.

"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag, 325
A river steep and wide.

"The loud wind never reached
the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the
Moon
The dead men gave a groan. 330

"They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved
on; 335
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools —
We were a ghastly crew. 340

"The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!" But not by the
"Be calm, thou Wedding- souls of the
Guest! 346 men, nor by
"Twas not those souls that earth or mid-
fled in pain, dle air, but by
Which to their corpses came a blessed troop
again, of angelic spir-
But a troop of spirits blest: it, sent down
guardian saint.

"For when it dawned — they dropped
their arms, 350
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

"Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun; 355
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

"Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song, 365
That makes the heavens be mute.

"It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June, 370
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375
Moved onward from beneath.

"Under the keel nine fathom The lonesome
deep, Spirit from the
From the land of mist and south-pole car-
snow, ries on the
The Spirit slid: and it was he ship as far as
That made the ship to go. 380 the Line, in
The sails at noon left off their obedience to
tune, the angelic
And the ship stood still also. troop, but still
requireth ven-
geance.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir, 385
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound: 390
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

"How long in that same fit I The Polar
lay, Spirit's fellow
I have not to declare; demons, the
But ere my living life re- invisible in-
turned, habitants of
I heard, and in my soul 395 the element,
discerned, take part in
Two voices in the air. his wrong; and
two of them
relate, one to
the other; that
penance long
and heavy for
the ancient
Mariner hath
been accorded
to the Polar
Spirit, who
returneth
southward.

"Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this
the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full
low 400
The harmless Albatross.

"The Spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.' 405

"The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'"

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

"But tell me, tell me! speak again, 410
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?"

SECOND VOICE

"Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently 415
Up to the Moon is cast —

"If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously 420
She looketh down on him."

FIRST VOICE

"But why drives on that ship
so fast,
Without or wave or wind?"

The Mariner
hath been cast
into a trance;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

SECOND VOICE

"The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind." 425

"Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

"I woke, and we were sailing
on 430
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the
moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

The super-
natural motion
is retarded;
the Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

"All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter: 435
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

"The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440
Nor turn them up to pray.

"And now this spell was snapt: 445
once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen —

The curse is
finally ex-
piated.

"Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend 450
Doth close behind him tread.

"But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade. 455

"It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

"Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

"Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see? 465
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?
And the an-
cient Mariner
beholdeth his
native coun-
try.

"We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway. 470

"The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon. 475

"The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

"And the bay was white with silent light 480
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows
were,
In crimson colors came. The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

"A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were: 485
I turned my eyes upon the deck —
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

"Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man, 490
On every corse there stood. And appear in
their own
forms of light.

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light; 495

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart —
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

"But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

"The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast: 505
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

"I saw a third — I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!

He singeth loud his godly hymns 510
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

"This Hermit good lives in that The Hermit of
wood the wood,
Which slopes down to the sea. 515
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

"He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —
He hath a cushion plump: 520
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

"The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and
fair, 525
That signal made but now?'

"'Strange, by my faith!' the Approacheth
Hermit said — the ship with
 wonder.
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those
sails,
How thin they are and sere! 530
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

"'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

"'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look —
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared' — 'Push on, push on!' 540
Said the Hermit cheerily.

"The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard. 545

"Under the water it rumbled The ship sud-
on, denly sinketh.
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

"Stunned by that loud and The ancient
dreadful sound, Mariner is
 saved in the
Which sky and ocean smote, Pilot's boat. 550

Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat. 555

"Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

"I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked 560
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

"I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go, 565
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

"And now, all in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

"'O shrive me, shrive me, holy The ancient
man!' Mariner ear-
 nestly entreat-
The Hermit crossed his brow. eth the Hermit
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid to shrive
 thee say — him; and the
 576 penance of life
What manner of man art thou?' falls on him.

"Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale; 580
And then it left me free.

"Since then, at an uncertain And ever and
hour, anon through-
That agony returns; out his future
And till my ghastly tale is told, life an agony
This heart within me burns. constraineth
 585 him to travel
 from land to
 land,

"I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach. 590

"What loud uproar bursts from that
door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell, 595
Which biddeth me to prayer!

"O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seem'd there to be.

600

"Oh sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

"To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

605

"Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach
by his own
example love
and reverence
to all things
that God made
and loveth.

610

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

615

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

620

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

625

1798

FROST AT MIDNIGHT

The Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry
Came loud — and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant¹ slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and
wood,
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and
wood,
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not;

¹ His son Hartley, born in 1796.

Only that film, which fluttered on the
grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks, the idling
Spirit
By its own mood interprets, every where
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

15

20

But O! how oft,
How oft, at school,¹ with most believing
mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering *stranger!* and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-
tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music,
rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt,
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my
dreams!
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fixed with mock study on my swimming
book:
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped
up,
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My play-mate when we both were clothed
alike!

25

30

36

41

45

50

55

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my
side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep
calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at
thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
And in far other scenes! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a
breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags

¹ Christ's Hospital.

Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds
Which image in their bulk both lakes and
shores

And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and
hear

The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible 60
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in Himself.
Great universal Teacher! He shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask. 65

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch 70
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-
drops fall,

Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon. 75

1798.

CHRISTABEL

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION. 1816

'The first part of the following poem was written in the year 1797, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part after my return from Germany, in the year 1800, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year.'

'It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been published in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame. . . .

'I have only to add, that the metre of the *Christabel* is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition, in the nature of the imagery or passion.'

* This was never done.

Christabel is essentially a tale of witchery — a story suggested by the music of the poem rather than told definitely in words. Coleridge remarked once that the poem was "partly founded on the notion that the virtuous of the world save the wicked." Perhaps the famous lines 408–26 contain something of a clue. Geraldine, of course, is a supernatural spirit of evil.

PART I

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing
cock,

Tu — whit! — Tu — whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew. 5

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which
From her kennel beneath the rock
Maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the
hour; 10

Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark. 15
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray: 20
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, *Christabel*,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late, 25
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away. 30

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak
But moss and rarest mistletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak 35
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, *Christabel*!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is she cannot tell. — 40
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air 45
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek —
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can, 50
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak, 55
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone: 60
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandalled were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair. 65
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she —
Beautiful exceedingly!

"Mary mother, save me now!"
(Said Christabel,) "And who art thou?" 70

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet: —
"Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:"
"Stretch forth thy hand, and have no
fear!" 75
Said Christabel, "How camest thou here?"
And the lady, whose voice was faint and
sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet: —

"My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine: 80
Five warriors seized me yesternorn.
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind, 85
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white:
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be; 90
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced, I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,

Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive. 95
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:
He placed me underneath this oak;
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell —
I thought I heard, some minutes past, 100
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee."

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
And comforted fair Geraldine: 105
"Oh well, bright dame! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline:
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth, and friends withal,
To guide and guard you safe and free 110
Home to your noble father's hall."

She rose; and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel: 115
"All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth, 120
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me."

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well;
A little door she opened straight, 125
All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched
out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main 130
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate:
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear, 135
They crossed the court: right glad they
were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side:
"Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!"
"Alas, alas!" said Geraldine, 141
"I cannot speak for weariness."
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they
were.

Outside her kennel the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owl's scritch:
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will!
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
"Oh softly tread," said Christabel,
"My father seldom sleepeth well."

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death, with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

"O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers."

"And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?"
Christabel answered — "Woe is me!

145 She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
200
150 O mother dear! that thou wert here!"
"I would," said Geraldine, "she were!"

But soon with altered voice, said she —
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
I have power to bid thee flee."
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she.
210
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine —
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue —
215
"Alas!" said she, "this ghastly rite —
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!"
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, "'tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank: 220
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée. 225

And thus the lofty lady spake —
"All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
230
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie."

Quoth Christabel, "So let it be!" 235
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
240
That vain it were her lids to close:
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed, 245
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,

Like one that shuddered, she unbound
 The cincture from beneath her breast:
 Her silken robe, and inner vest,
 Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
 Behold! her bosom and half her side —
 A sight to dream of, not to tell!
 Oh shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
 Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
 Deep from within she seems half-way
 To lift some weight with sick assay,
 And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
 Then suddenly, as one defied,
 Collects herself in scorn and pride,
 And lay down by the maiden's side! —
 And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah well-a-day!

And with low voice and doleful look
 These words did say:
 "In the touch of this bosom there worketh a
 spell,
 Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-
 morrow,
 This mark of my shame, this seal of my
 sorrow:

But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning,
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly
 fair:
 And didst bring her home with thee in love
 and in charity,
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp
 air."

THE CONCLUSION TO PART I

It was a lovely sight to see
 The lady Christabel, when she
 Was praying at the old oak tree.

Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows;
 Her slender palms together prest,
 Heaving sometimes on her breast;
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale —
 Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
 And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
 Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
 Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
 Dreaming that alone, which is —

O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
 The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?
 And lo! the worker of these harms,
 That holds the maiden in her arms,
 Seems to slumber still and mild,
 As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
 O Geraldine! since arms of thine
 Have been the lovely lady's prison.
 O Geraldine! one hour was thine —
 Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
 The night-birds all that hour were still.
 But now they are jubilant anew,
 From cliff and tower, tu — whoo! tu —
 whoo!
 Tu — whoo! tu — whoo! from wood and
 fell!

And see! the lady Christabel
 Gathers herself from out her trance;
 Her limbs relax, her countenance
 Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
 Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds —
 Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
 And oft the while she seems to smile
 As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
 Like a youthful hermitess,
 Beauteous in a wilderness,
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
 And, if she move unquietly,
 Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
 Comes back and tingles in her feet.
 No doubt she hath a vision sweet.
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere?
 What if she knew her mother near?
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,
 That saints will aid if men will call:
 For the blue sky bends over all!

PART II

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
 Knells us back to a world of death.
 These words Sir Leoline first said,
 When he rose and found his lady dead:
 These words Sir Leoline will say,
 Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began,
 That still at dawn the sacristan,
 Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
 Five and forty beads must tell
 Between each stroke — a warning knell,
 Which not a soul can choose but hear
 From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, "So let it knell! 345
 And let the drowsy sacristan
 Still count as slowly as he can!
 There is no lack of such, I ween,
 As well fill up the space between."
 In Langdale Pike and Witch's lair, 350
 And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
 With ropes of rock and bells of air
 Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
 Who all give back, one after t' other,
 The death-note to their living brother; 355
 And oft too, by the knell offended,
 Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
 The devil mocks the doleful tale
 With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and
 cloud 360
 That merry peal comes ringing loud;
 And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
 And rises lightly from the bed;
 Puts on her silken vestments white,
 And tricks her hair in lovely plight, 365
 And nothing doubting of her spell
 Awakens the lady Christabel.
 "Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
 I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied 370
 The same who lay down by her side —
 Oh rather say, the same whom she
 Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
 Nay, fairer yet; and yet more fair!
 For she belike hath drunken deep 375
 Of all the blessedness of sleep!
 And while she spake, her looks, her air,
 Such gentle thankfulness declare,
 That (so it seemed) her girded vests
 Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts. 380
 "Sure I have sinned!" said Christabel,
 "Now heaven be praised if all be well!"
 And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
 Did she the lofty lady greet,
 With such perplexity of mind 385
 As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly ar-
 rayed
 Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
 That He, who on the cross did groan,
 Might wash away her sins unknown, 390
 She forthwith led fair Geraldine
 To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and lady tall
 Are pacing both into the hall,
 And pacing on through page and groom, 395
 Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
 His gentle daughter to his breast,
 With cheerful wonder in his eyes
 The lady Geraldine espies, 400
 And gave such welcome to the same,
 As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
 And when she told her father's name,
 Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale, 405
 Murmuring o'er the name again,
 Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
 But whispering tongues can poison truth;
 And constancy lives in realms above; 410
 And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
 And to be wroth with one we love
 Doth work like madness in the brain.
 And thus it chanced, as I divine,
 With Roland and Sir Leoline. 415
 Each spake words of high disdain
 And insult to his heart's best brother:
 They parted — ne'er to meet again!
 But never either found another
 To free the hollow heart from paining — 420
 They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
 Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
 A dreary sea now flows between: —
 But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
 Shall wholly do away, I ween, 425
 The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
 Stood gazing on the damsel's face:
 And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
 Came back upon his heart again. 430

Oh then the Baron forgot his age,
 His noble heart swelled high with rage;
 He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
 He would proclaim it far and wide,
 With trump and solemn heraldry, 435
 That they who thus had wronged the dame,
 Were base as spotted infamy!
 "And if they dare deny the same,
 My herald shall appoint a week,
 And let the recreant traitors seek 440
 My tourney court — that there and then
 I may dislodge their reptile souls
 From the bodies and forms of men!"
 He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!
 For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he
 kenned 445
 In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face,
 And fondly in his arms he took

Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
 Prolonging it with joyous look, 450
 Which when she viewed, a vision fell
 Upon the soul of Christabel,
 The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
 She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again—
 (Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee, 455
 Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)

Again she saw that bosom old,
 Again she felt that bosom cold,
 And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:
 Whereat the Knight turned wildly round, 460
 And nothing saw but his own sweet maid
 With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
 And in its stead that vision blest,
 Which comforted her after-rest 465
 While in the lady's arms she lay,
 Had put a rapture in her breast,
 And on her lips and o'er her eyes
 Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,
 "What ails then my beloved child?" 470
 The Baron said — His daughter mild
 Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
 I ween, she had no power to tell
 Aught else: so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine, 475
 Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
 Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
 As if she feared she had offended
 Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
 And with such lowly tones she prayed, 480
 She might be sent without delay
 Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!

Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
 "Ho! Bracy, the bard, the charge be thine!
 Go thou, with music sweet and loud, 485
 And take two steeds with trappings proud,
 And take the youth whom thou lov'st
 best

To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
 And clothe you both in solemn vest,
 And over the mountains haste along, 490
 Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
 Detain you on the valley road.
 And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
 My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
 Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth 495
 Wood,
 And reaches soon that castle good
 Which stands and threatens Scotland's
 wastes.

"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses
 are fleet

Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet
 More loud than your horses' echoing feet!
 And loud and loud to Lord Roland call, 501
 Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!
 Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free —
 Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
 He bids thee come without delay 505
 With all thy numerous array;
 And take thy lovely daughter home:
 And he will meet thee on the way
 With all his numerous array
 White with their panting palfreys' foam: 510
 And by mine honor! I will say,
 That I repent me of the day
 When I spake words of fierce disdain
 To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine! —
 — For since that evil hour hath flown, 515
 Many a summer's sun hath shone;
 Yet ne'er found I a friend again
 Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
 Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing; 520
 And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
 His gracious hail on all bestowing! —
 "Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
 Are sweeter than my harp can tell;
 Yet might I gain a boon of thee, 525
 This day my journey should not be,
 So strange a dream hath come to me;
 That I had vowed with music loud
 To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
 Warned by a vision in my rest! 530
 For in my sleep I saw that dove,
 That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
 And call'st by thy own daughter's name —
 Sir Leoline! I saw the same
 Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan, 535
 Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
 Which when I saw and when I heard,
 I wondered what might ail the bird;
 For nothing near it could I see,
 Save the grass and green herbs underneath
 the old tree. 540

"And in my dream methought I went
 To search out what might there be found;
 And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
 That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
 I went and peered, and could descry 545
 No cause for her distressful cry;
 But yet for her dear lady's sake
 I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
 When lo! I saw a bright green snake
 Coiled around its wings and neck. 550
 Green as the herbs on which it couched,

Close by the dove's its head it crouched;
 And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
 Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!
 I woke; it was the midnight hour, 555
 The clock was echoing in the tower;
 But though my slumber was gone by,
 This dream it would not pass away —
 It seems to live upon my eye!
 And thence I vowed this self-same day, 560
 With music strong and saintly song
 To wander through the forest bare,
 Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,
 Half-listening heard him with a smile; 565
 Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
 His eyes made up of wonder and love;
 And said in courtly accents fine,
 "Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
 With arms more strong than harp or song, 570
 Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"
 He kissed her forehead as he spake,
 And Geraldine, in maiden wise,
 Casting down her large bright eyes,
 With blushing cheek and courtesy fine 575
 She turned her from Sir Leoline;
 Softly gathering up her train,
 That o'er her right arm fell again;
 And folded her arms across her chest,
 And couched her head upon her breast, 580
 And looked askance at Christabel —
 Jesu Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
 And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
 Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye, 585
 And with somewhat of malice, and more of
 dread,
 At Christabel she looked askance! —
 One moment — and the sight was fled!
 But Christabel in dizzy trance
 Stumbling on the unsteady ground 590
 Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;
 And Geraldine again turned round,
 And like a thing that sought relief,
 Full of wonder and full of grief,
 She rolled her large bright eyes divine 595
 Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
 She nothing sees — no sight but one!
 The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
 I know not how, in fearful wise 600
 So deeply had she drunken in
 That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
 That all her features were resigned
 To this sole image in her mind;
 And passively did imitate 605

That look of dull and treacherous hate!
 And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
 Still picturing that look askance
 With forced unconscious sympathy
 Full before her father's view — 610
 As far as such a look could be
 In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid
 Paused awhile, and inly prayed:
 Then falling at the Baron's feet, 615
 "By my mother's soul do I entreat
 That thou this woman send away!"
 She said: and more she could not say:
 For what she knew she could not tell,
 O'ermastered by the mighty spell. 620

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
 Sir Leoline? Thy only child
 Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
 So fair, so innocent, so mild;
 The same, for whom thy lady died! 625
 O, by the pangs of her dear mother
 Think thou no evil of thy child!
 For her, and thee, and for no other,
 She prayed the moment ere she died:
 Prayed that the babe for whom she died, 630
 Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!
 That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
 Sir Leoline!
 And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
 Her child and thine? 635

Within the Baron's heart and brain
 If thoughts, like these, had any share,
 They only swelled his rage and pain,
 And did but work confusion there.
 His heart was cleft with pain and rage, 640
 His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
 Dishonored thus in his old age;
 Dishonored by his only child,
 And all his hospitality
 To the insulted daughter of his friend 645
 By more than woman's jealousy
 Brought thus to a disgraceful end —
 He rolled his eye with stern regard
 Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
 And said in tones abrupt, austere — 650
 "Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
 I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;
 And turning from his own sweet maid,
 The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
 Led forth the lady Geraldine! 655

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II

A little child, a limber elf,
 Singing, dancing to itself,
 A fairy thing with red round cheeks,

That always finds, and never seeks,
 Makes such a vision to the sight 660
 As fills a father's eyes with light;
 And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
 Upon his heart, that he at last
 Must needs express his love's excess
 With words of unmeant bitterness. 665
 Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
 Thoughts so all unlike each other;
 To mutter and mock a broken charm,
 To dally with wrong that does no harm.
 Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty 670
 At each wild word to feel within
 A sweet recoil of love and pity.
 And what, if in a world of sin
 (O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
 Such giddiness of heart and brain 675
 Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
 So talks as it's most used to do.

1797-1800.

DEJECTION: AN ODE

This poem, according to Coleridge, was written during a fit of dejection and addressed to Wordsworth. When Coleridge printed the poem, he disguised the references to Wordsworth, using Otway's name in stanza 7 and "Dear Lady" in stanza 8.

WRITTEN APRIL 4, 1802

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
 With the old Moon in her arms;
 And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
 We shall have a deadly storm.

Ballad of SIR PATRICK SPENCE

I

Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
 The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
 This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
 Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
 Than those which mold yon cloud in lazy flakes, 5
 Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
 Upon the strings of this Æolian lute
 Which better far were mute.
 For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
 And overspread with phantom light, 10
 (With swimming phantom light o'erspread
 But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
 I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
 The coming-on of rain and squally blast.
 And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
 And the slant night-shower driving loud 15
 and fast!

Those sounds which oft have raised me,
 whilst they awed,
 And sent my soul abroad,
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it
 move and live! 20

2

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
 A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
 Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
 In word, or sigh, or tear —
 O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood, 25
 To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,
 All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
 And still I gaze — and with how blank an
 eye! 30
 And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
 That give away their motion to the stars;
 Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
 Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always
 seen:

Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew 35
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
 I see them all so excellently fair,
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

3

My genial spirits fail;
 And what can these things avail 40
 To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
 It were a vain endeavor,
 Though I should gaze for ever
 On that green light that lingers in the west:
 I may not hope from outward forms to win 45
 The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

4

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
 And in our life alone does Nature live:
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
 And would we aught behold, of higher
 worth, 50
 Than that inanimate cold world allowed
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
 Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
 A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
 Enveloping the Earth — 55
 And from the soul itself must there be sent

A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

5

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be! 60
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.

Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was
given,

Save to the pure, and in their purest hour, 65
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and
shower,

Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which, wedding Nature to us, gives in dower
A new Earth and new Heaven,

Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud —
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous
cloud —

We in ourselves rejoice! 72
And thence flows all that charms or ear or
sight,

All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colors a suffusion from that light. 75

6

There was a time when, though my path
was rough,

This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happi-
ness:

For Hope grew round me, like the twining
vine, 80

And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed
mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;

But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination. 86

For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;

And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural
man — 90

This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my
soul.

7

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my
mind,

Reality's dark dream! 95
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed.

What a scream

Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that
rav'st without, 100

Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted
tree,

Or pine-grove whither woodman never
clomb,

Or lonely house, long held the witches'
home,

Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of show-
ers, 105

Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping
flowers,

Mak'st Devil's yule, with worse than wintry
song,

The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves
among.

Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold! 110

What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,

With groans of trampled men, with smart-
ing wounds —

At once they groan with pain, and shudder
with the cold!

But hush! there is a pause of deepest
silence! 115

And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings —
all is over —

It tells another tale, with sounds less deep
and loud!

A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight, 120

As Otway's¹ self had framed the tender lay,
'Tis of a little child²

Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her
way:

And now moans low in bitter grief and
fear, 125

And now screams loud, and hopes to make
her mother hear.

8

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of
sleep:

Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,

And may this storm be but a mountain-
birth, 130

May all the stars hang bright above her
dwelling,

¹ Thomas Otway, "tender" Otway, the English drama-
tist, 1652-85, author of *Venice Preserved*.

² The tale that Coleridge refers to here is, of course,
Wordsworth's *Lucy Gray*.

Silent as though they watched the sleeping
 Earth!
 With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice; 135
 To her may all things live, from pole to
 pole,
 Their life the eddying of her living soul!
 O simple spirit, guided from above,
 Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
 Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice. 140
 1802.

YOUTH AND AGE

Verse, a breeze amid blossoms straying,
 Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee —
 Both were mine! Life went a-maying
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young! 5
 When I was young? — Ah, woeful When!
 Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
 This breathing house not built with hands,
 This body that does me grievous wrong,
 O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands, 10
 How lightly *then* it flashed along: —
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
 On winding lakes and rivers wide,
 That ask no aid of sail or oar,
 That fear no spite of wind or tide! 15
 Nought cared this body for wind or weather
 When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
 Friendship is a sheltering tree;
 O! the joys, that came down shower-like, 20
 Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
 Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woeful Ere,
 Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
 O Youth! for years so many and sweet, 25
 'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
 I'll think it but a fond conceit —
 It cannot be that Thou art gone!
 Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled: —
 And thou wert aye a masker bold! 30
 What strange disguise hast now put on,
 To *make believe*, that thou art gone?
 I see these locks in silvery slips,
 This drooping gait, this altered size:
 But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips, 35
 And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
 Life is but thought: so think I will
 That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
 But the tears of mournful eve! 40

Where no hope is, life's a warning
 That only serves to make us grieve,
 When we are old:
 That only serves to make us grieve
 With oft and tedious taking-leave, 45
 Like some poor nigh-related guest,
 That may not rudely be dismissed;
 Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
 And tells the jest without the smile.

1823-32.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

LINES COMPOSED 21ST FEBRUARY, 1827

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their
 lair —
 The bees are stirring — birds are on the
 wing —
 And Winter slumbering in the open air,
 Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
 And I the while, the sole unbusy thing, 5
 Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor
 sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
 blow,
 Have traced the fount whence streams of
 nectar flow.
 Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye
 may, 10
 For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams,
 away!
 With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I
 stroll:
 And would you learn the spells that drowse
 my soul? 15
 Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
 And Hope without an object cannot live.

1827.

BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA

1817

Biographia Literaria contains the best example of Coleridge's criticism in his discussion of Wordsworth's theory of poetry and its application in *Lyrical Ballads*. Chapters 14, 17, and 18 embody this discussion. Chapter 10 is interesting as autobiography, and as an account of the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth at Stowey, and of their situation when, because of their sympathy with the French Revolution, they were objects of suspicion and espionage. In regard to the financial history of *The Watchman*, Coleridge's memory was inaccurate. Coleridge's friend and patron, Joseph Cottle, wrote: "The fact is Biggs the printer (a worthy man) never threatened nor even importuned for the money."

CHAPTER X

... Toward the close of the first year from the time, that in an inauspicious hour I left the friendly cloisters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever honored Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded by sundry philanthropists and Anti-polemists¹ to set on foot a periodical work, and entitled *The Watchman*, that, according to the general motto of the work, *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt it from the stamp-tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price only four-pence. Accordingly with a flaming prospectus, — "*Knowledge is Power*," "To cry the state of the political atmosphere," — and so forth, I set off on a tour to the North, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers, preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as an hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon² might be seen on me. For I was at that time and long after, though a Trinitarian (that is *ad normam Platonis*)³ in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion; more accurately, I was a Psilanthropist,⁴ one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the resurrection rather than on the crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested. My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of what I believed to be the truth, and the will of my Maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm I did not think of myself at all.

My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow-chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth, that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundery poker. O that face! a face κατ' ἐμφασιν!⁵ I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black,

twine-like hair, *pingui-nitescens*,¹ cut in a straight line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder eye-brows, that looked like a scorched after-math from a last week's shaving. His coat collar behind in perfect unison, both of color and lustre, with the coarse yet glib cordage, which I suppose he called his hair, and which with a bend inward at the nape of the neck, — the only approach
10 to flexure in his whole figure, — slunk in behind his waistcoat; while the countenance lank, dark, very hard, and with strong perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a used grid-
15 iron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the thorough-bred, a true lover of liberty, and, as I was informed, had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in
20 The Revelation, that *spoke as a dragon*. A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first stroke in the new business I had undertaken of an author, yea, and of an author
25 trading on his own account. My companion after some imperfect sentences and a multitude of hums and has, abandoned the cause to his client; and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros,² the tallow-chandler, varying my notes, through the whole gamut of eloquence, from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued,
30 I described, I promised, I prophesied; and beginning with the captivity of nations I ended with the near approach of the millennium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state out
40 of the Religious Musings:

— Such delights
As float to earth, permitted visitants!
When in some hour of solemn jubilee
The massive gates of Paradise are thrown
45 Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
And odors snatched from beds of amaranth,
And they, that from the crystal river of life
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales!

50 My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praiseworthy patience, though, as I was afterwards told, on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial, it was a melting day with him. "And what, Sir," he said, after a short pause, "might be the cost?" "Only four-pence," — (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal

¹ opponents of war.² Roman Church.³ By rule of Plato which included the good, the true, and the beautiful.⁴ Coleridge's coinage from the Greek words ψιλός and άνθρωπος, merely man.⁵ according to appearance.¹ shining with oil.² lover of freedom.

bathos of that four-pence!) — “only four-pence, Sir, each number, to be published on every eighth day.” — “That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much, did you say, there was to be for the money?” — “Thirty-two pages, Sir, large octavo, closely printed.” — “Thirty and two pages? Bless me! why except what I does in a family way on the Sabbath, that’s more than I ever reads, Sir! all the year round. I am as great a one, as any man in Brummagem, Sir! for liberty and truth and all them sort of things, but as to this, — no offence, I hope, Sir, — I must beg to be excused.”

So ended my first canvass: from causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and, having perused it, measured me from head to foot and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing. I presented my prospectus to him. He rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then most deliberately and significantly rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and lastly putting it into his pocket turned his back on me with an “over-run with these articles!” and so without another syllable retired into his counting-house. And, I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.

This, I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner he imported me to smoke a pipe with him, and two or three other *illuminati* of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my lifetime, and then it was herb tobacco mixed with Oronooko. On the assurance, however, that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing too that it was of a yellow color; — not forgetting the lamentable difficulty, I have always experienced, in saying, “No,” and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing, — I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bowl with salt. I was soon however compelled to resign it, in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes,

which, as I had drunk but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement; but the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again, and, I had scarcely entered the minister’s drawing-room, and opened a small packet of letters, which he had received from Bristol for me; ere I sank back on the sofa in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings, and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is white-washing, deathly pale and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while one after another there dropped in the different gentlemen, who had been invited to meet, and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of tobacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked round on the party, my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment one of the gentlemen began the conversation, with “Have you seen a paper to-day, Mr. Coleridge?” “Sir!” I replied, rubbing my eyes, “I am far from convinced, that a Christian is permitted to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest.” This remark, so ludicrously inapposite to, or rather, incongruous with, the purpose, for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced in involuntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom indeed have I passed so many delightful hours, as I enjoyed in that room from the moment of that laugh till an early hour the next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me in the most friendly and yet most flattering expressions, that neither was the employment fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet, if I determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvass by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and, that fail-

not see

not cut

ing, the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby; Nottingham, Sheffield, — indeed, at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall with affectionate pleasure the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me how opposite even then my principles were to those of Jacobinism¹ or even of democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the tenth and eleventh numbers of *The Friend*.

From this memorable tour I returned with nearly a thousand names on the subscription list of *The Watchman*; yet more than half convinced, that prudence dictated the abandonment of the scheme. But for this very reason I persevered in it; for I was at that period of my life so completely haggard by the fear of being influenced by selfish motives, that to know a mode of conduct to be the dictate of prudence was a sort of presumptive proof to my feelings, that the contrary was the dictate of duty. Accordingly, I commenced the work, which was announced in London by long bills in letters larger than had ever been seen before, and which, I have been informed, for I did not see them myself, eclipsed the glories even of the lottery puffs. But alas! the publication of the very first number was delayed beyond the day announced for its appearance. In the second number an essay against fast days, with a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah² for its motto, lost me near five hundred of my subscribers at one blow. In the two following numbers I made enemies of all my Jacobin and democratic patrons; for, disgusted by their infidelity, and their adoption of French morals with French *philosophy*;³ and perhaps thinking, that charity ought to begin nearest home; instead of abusing the government and the Aristocrats chiefly or entirely, as had been expected of me, I levelled my attacks at “modern patriotism,” and even ventured to declare my belief, that whatever the motives of ministers might have been for the sedition, or as it was then the fashion to call them, the *gagging* bills,⁴ yet the bills themselves would produce

an effect to be desired by all the true friends of freedom, as far as they should contribute to deter men from openly declaiming on subjects, the principles of which they had never bottomed and from “pleading for the poor and ignorant, instead of pleading *for* them.” At the same time I avowed my conviction, that national education and a concurring spread of the Gospel were the indispensable condition of any true political melioration. Thus by the time the seventh number was published, I had the mortification — (but why should I say this, when in truth I cared too little for any thing that concerned my worldly interests to be at all mortified about it?) — of seeing the preceding numbers exposed in sundry old iron shops for a penny a piece. At the ninth number I dropt the work. But from the London publisher I could not obtain a shilling; he was a ——— and set me at defiance. From other places I procured but little, and after such delays as rendered that little worth nothing; and I should have been inevitably thrown into jail by my Bristol printer, who refused to wait even for a month, for a sum between eighty and ninety pounds, if the money had not been paid for me by a man by no means affluent, a dear friend,⁵ who attached himself to me from my first arrival at Bristol, who has continued my friend with a fidelity unconquered by time or even by my own apparent neglect; a friend from whom I never received an advice that was not wise, nor a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate.

Conscientiously an opponent of the first revolutionary war, yet with my eyes thoroughly opened to the true character and impotence of the favorers of revolutionary principles in England, principles which I held in abhorrence, — (for it was part of my political creed, that whoever ceased to act as an individual by making himself a member of any society not sanctioned by his Government, forfeited the rights of a citizen) — a vehement Anti-Ministerialist, but after the invasion of Switzerland,² a more vehement Anti-Gallican, and still more intensely an Anti-Jacobin, I retired to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly, that literature was not a profession, by which I could expect to live; for I could not disguise from myself, that, whatever my talents might or might not be in

¹ The extremists of the French Revolution were known as Jacobins.

² “Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp.” Isaiah XVI, 11.

³ Coleridge puns by substituting *ψιλος* for *φίλος* — “mere wisdom” instead of “love of wisdom.”

⁴ Laws passed in 1793 restricting liberty of speech and assembly.

⁵ Josiah Wade.

² The French attacked Switzerland in 1798. Coleridge had retired to Stowey in 1796.

other respects, yet they were not of the sort that could enable me to become a popular writer; and that whatever my opinions might be in themselves, they were almost equidistant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats. Of the unsaleable nature of my writings I had an amusing memento one morning from our own servant girl. For happening to rise at an earlier hour than usual, I observed her putting an extravagant quantity of paper into the grate in order to light the fire, and mildly checked her for her wastefulness; "La, Sir!" (replied poor Nanny) "why, it is only Watchmen."

I now devoted myself to poetry and to the study of ethics and psychology; and so profound was my admiration at this time of Hartley's *Essay on Man*,¹ that I gave his name to my first-born. In addition to the gentleman, my neighbor,² whose garden joined on to my little orchard, and the cultivation of whose friendship had been my sole motive in choosing Stowey for my residence, I was so fortunate as to acquire, shortly after my settlement there, an invaluable blessing in the society and neighborhood of one, to whom I could look up with equal reverence, whether I regarded him as a poet, a philosopher, or a man.³ His conversation extended to almost all subjects, except physics and politics; with the latter he never troubled himself. Yet neither my retirement nor my utter abstraction from all the disputes of the day could secure me in those jealous times from suspicion and obloquy, which did not stop at me, but extended to my excellent friend, whose perfect innocence was even adduced as a proof of his guilt. One of the many busy sycophants⁴ of that day, — (I here use the word sycophant in its original sense, as a wretch who *flatters* the prevailing party by *informing* against his neighbors, under pretence that they are exporters of prohibited *figs* or *fancies*, — for the moral application of the term it matters not which) — one of these sycophantic law-mongrels, discoursing on the politics of the neighborhood, uttered the following deep remark: "As to Coleridge, there is not so much harm in *him*, so for he is a whirl-brain that talks whatever comes uppermost; but that —! he is the *dark* traitor. *You never hear HIM say a syllable on the subject.*"

Now that the hand of Providence has disciplined all Europe into sobriety, as men tame wild elephants, by alternate blows and caresses; now that Englishmen of all classes are restored to their old English notions and feelings; it will with difficulty be credited, how great an influence was at that time possessed and exerted by the spirit of secret defamation, — (the too constant attendant on party-zeal) — during the restless interim from 1793 to the commencement of the Addington¹ administration, or the year before the truce of Amiens. For by the latter period the minds of the partizans, exhausted by excess
15 of stimulation and humbled by mutual disappointment, had become languid. The same causes, that inclined the nation to peace, disposed the individuals to reconciliation. Both parties had found themselves in the
20 wrong. The one had confessedly mistaken the moral character of the revolution, and the other had miscalculated both its moral and its physical resources. The experiment was made at the price of great, almost,
25 we may say, of humiliating sacrifices; and wise men foresaw that it would fail, at least in its direct and ostensible object. Yet it was purchased cheaply, and realized an object of equal value, and, if possible, of still more
30 vital importance. For it brought about a national unanimity unexampled in our history since the reign of Elizabeth; and Providence, never wanting to a good work when men have done their parts, soon provided a common *focus* in the cause of Spain,
35 which made us all once more Englishmen by at once gratifying and correcting the predilections of both parties. The sincere reverers of the throne felt the cause of loyalty ennobled by its alliance with that of freedom; while the *honest* zealots of the people could not but admit, that freedom itself assumed a more
40 winning form, humanized by loyalty and consecrated by religious principle. The youthful enthusiasts who, flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution, had made a boast of *expatriating* their hopes and fears, now, disciplined by the succeeding storms and sobered by increase of years, had been taught
45 to prize and honor the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute pre-requisite and necessary basis of popular rights.

If in Spain² too disappointment has nipped

¹ *Observations on Man*, etc., 1748.

² Thomas Poole. ³ Wordsworth.

⁴ *Εύκους φαίνειν*, to show or detect figs, the exportation of which from Athens was forbidden. (Coleridge's note.)

¹ Henry Addington (1757-1844), afterwards Lord Sidmouth, became Premier in 1801. The Peace of Amiens between France and England was signed in October of that year.

² Ferdinand VII, restored to the throne of Spain in

our too forward expectations, yet all is not destroyed that is checked. The crop was perhaps springing up too rank in the stalk to *kern* well; and there were, doubtless, symptoms of the Gallican blight on it. If superstition and despotism have been suffered to let in their wolfish sheep to trample and eat it down even to the surface, yet the roots remain alive, and the second growth may prove the stronger and healthier for the temporary interruption. At all events, to *us* heaven has been just and gracious. The *people* of England did their best, and have received their rewards. Long may we continue to deserve it! Causes, which it had been too generally the habit of former statesmen to regard as belonging to another world, are now admitted by all ranks to have been the main agents of our success. "*We fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.*"¹ If then unanimity grounded on moral feelings has been among the least equivocal sources of our national glory, that man deserves the esteem of his countrymen, even as patriots, who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the preservation and continuance of that unanimity by the disclosure and establishment of principles. For by these all opinions must be ultimately tried; and, (as the feelings of men are worthy of regard only as far as they are the representatives of their fixed opinions,) on the knowledge of these all unanimity, not accidental and fleeting, must be grounded. Let the scholar, who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke at the commencement of the American war and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French revolution. He will find the principles exactly the same and the deductions the same; but the practical inferences almost opposite in the one case from those drawn in the other; yet in both equally legitimate and in both equally confirmed by the results. Whence gained he the superiority of foresight? Whence arose the striking difference, and in most instances even, the discrepancy between the grounds assigned by him and by those who voted with him, on the same questions? How are we to explain the notorious fact, that the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke are more interesting at the present day than they were found at the time of their first publication; while those of his

illustrious confederates are either forgotten, or exist only to furnish proofs, that the same conclusion, which one man had deduced scientifically, *may* be brought out by another in consequence of errors that luckily chanced to neutralize each other. It would be unhandsome as a conjecture, even were it not, as it actually is, false in point of fact to attribute this difference to the deficiency of talent on the part of Burke's friends, or of experience, or of historical knowledge. The satisfactory solution is, that Edmund Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye, which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the laws that determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to principles. He was a scientific statesman; and therefore a seer. For every principle contains in itself the germs of a prophecy; and, as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward and, (to men in general,) the only test of its claim to the title. Wearisome as Burke's refinements appeared to his parliamentary auditors, yet the cultivated classes throughout Europe have reason to be thankful, that he

— went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought
of dining.

Our very sign-boards (said an illustrious friend to me) give evidence, that there has been a Titian in the world. In like manner, not only the debates in parliament, not only our proclamations and state papers, but the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals are so many remembrancers of Edmund Burke. Of this the reader may easily convince himself, if either by recollection or reference he will compare the opposition newspapers at the commencement and during the five or six following years of the French revolution with the sentiments, and grounds of argument assumed in the same class of journals at present, and for some years past.

Whether the spirit of Jacobinism, which the writings of Burke exorcised from the higher and from the literary classes, may not, like the ghost in Hamlet, be heard moving and mining in the underground chambers with an activity the more dangerous because less noisy, may admit of a question. I have given my opinions on this point, and the grounds of them, in my letters to Judge Fletcher occasioned by his charge to the Wexford grand jury,² and published in the

1814, proved thoroughly reactionary, and the enemy of all reform.

¹ Judges IV, 18-22.

² 1 November and December, 1814. (Coleridge's note.)

Courier. Be this as it may, the evil spirit of jealousy, and with it the Cerberian whelps of feud and slander, no longer walk their rounds, in cultivated society.

Far different were the days to which these anecdotes have carried me back. The dark guesses of some zealous *Quidnunc* met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighborhood, that a spy was actually sent down from the government *pour surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance, but variety of these "honorable men" at the disposal of Ministers: for this proved a very honest fellow. After three weeks' truly Indian perseverance in tracking us, (for we were commonly together,) during all which time seldom were we out of doors, but he contrived to be within hearing, — and all the while utterly unsuspected; how indeed *could* such a suspicion enter our fancies? — he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try yet a little longer, but declared to him his belief, that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in His Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together behind a bank at the sea-side, (our favorite seat,) and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied, that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy Nozy*, which he was inclined to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at *this*, and to listen to *that*; but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined me on the road; (this occurred, as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage,) and, passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked of purpose in a democrat way in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of Jacobinism; but, (he added,) I had "plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as wicked thing, that he felt ashamed though he had only *put it on*." I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with his Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer; and so little did I suspect the true object of my "tempter

ere accuser," that I expressed with no small pleasure my hope and belief, that the conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. This incident therefore prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report, which through a friendly medium came to me from the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the Government gentleman in his best manner, but above all to be silent concerning such a person being in his house. At length he received Sir Dogberry's commands to accompany his guest at the final interview; and, after the absolving suffrage of the *gentleman honored with the confidence of Ministers*, answered, as follows, to the following queries: D. Well, landlord! and what do you know of the person in question? L. I see him often pass by with maister —, my landlord, (that is, the owner of the house,) and sometimes with the new-comers at Holford; ¹ but I never said a word to him or he to me. D. But do you not know, that he has distributed papers and hand-bills of a seditious nature among the common people? L. No, your Honor! I never heard of such a thing. D. Have you not seen this Mr. Coleridge, or heard of, his haranguing and talking to knots and clusters of the inhabitants? — What are you grinning at, Sir? L. Beg your Honor's pardon! but I was only thinking, how they'd have stared at him. If what I have heard be true, your Honor! they would not have understood a word he said. When our Vicar was here, Dr. L.² the master of the great school and Canon of Windsor, there was a great dinner party at maister —'s; and one of the farmers, that was there, told us that he and the Doctor talked real Hebrew Greek at each other for an hour together after dinner. D. Answer the question, Sir! does he ever harangue the people? L. I hope your Honor an't angry with me. I can say no more than I know. I never saw him talking with any one, but my landlord, and our curate, and the strange gentleman. D. Has he not been seen wandering on the hills towards the Channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country? L. Why, as to that, your Honor! I own, I have heard; I am sure, I would not wish to say ill of any body; but it is certain, that I have heard — D. Speak out, man! don't be afraid, you are doing your duty to your King and Govern-

¹ The village where Wordsworth and Miss Wordsworth resided. (Coleridge's note.)

² Dr. Langford. (Coleridge's note.)

ment. What have you heard? L. Why, folks do say, your Honor! as how that he is a *Poet*, and that he is going to put Quantock and all about here in print; and as they be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman has some *consarn* in the business." — So ended this formidable inquisition, the latter part of which alone requires explanation, and at the same time entitles the anecdote to a place in my literary life. I had considered it as a defect in the admirable poem of *The Task*, that the subject, which gives the title to the work, was not, and indeed could not be, carried on beyond the three or four first pages, and that, throughout the poem, the connections are frequently awkward, and the transitions abrupt and arbitrary. I sought for a subject, that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply in itself a natural connection to the parts, and unity to the whole. Such a subject I conceived myself to have found in a stream, traced from its source in the hills among the yellow-red moss and conical glass-shaped tufts of bent, to the first break or fall, where its drops become audible, and it begins to form a channel; thence to the peat and turf barn, itself built of the same dark squares as it sheltered; to the sheepfold; to the first cultivated plot of ground; to the lonely cottage and its bleak garden won from the heath; to the hamlet, the villages, the market-town, the manufactories, and the seaport. My walks therefore were almost daily on the top of Quantock, and among its sloping coombes. With my pencil and memorandum-book in my hand, I was *making studies*, as the artists call them, and often moulding my thoughts into verse, with the objects and imagery immediately before my senses. Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem, which was to have been entitled *The Brook*. Had I finished the work, it was my purpose in the heat of the moment to have dedicated it to our then committee of public safety as containing the charts and maps, with which I was to have supplied the French Government in aid of their plans of invasion. And these too for a tract of coast that, from Clevedon to Minehead, scarcely permits the approach of a fishing-boat!

CHAPTER XIV

Occasion of the *Lyrical Ballads*, and the objects originally proposed — Preface to the second edition — The

ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony — Philosophic definitions of a Poem and Poetry with scholia.

During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbors, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself — (to which of us I do not recollect) — that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*; in which it was agreed, that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote *The Ancient Mariner*, and was preparing among other poems, *The Dark Ladie*, and the *Christabel*, in which

I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the *Lyrical Ballads* were published; and were presented by him, as an experiment, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extracolloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of speech that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being: had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found too not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost

say, by its religious fervor. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface in the sense attributed to them and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater part of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honored more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with the opinions supported in that preface, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself, in kind, and in essence.

The office of philosophical disquisition consists in just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical process of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the result of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by

rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well-known enumeration of the days in the several months;

"Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November," &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm super-added, whatever be their contents, may be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may result from the attainment of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the *Bathyllus* even of an Anacreon, or the *Alexis* of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere super-addition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such, as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, which is opposed to works of science, which is opposed to its immediate object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species — (having *this* object in common with it) — it is discriminated by

proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking, than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem, which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distiches, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, becomes disjoined from its context, and forms a separate whole, instead of a harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air; — at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. *Præcipitandus est liber spiritus*,¹ says Petronius most happily. The epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of Plato, and Jeremy Taylor, and Burnet's²

¹ A free spirit should be thrown forward.

² Bishop Thomas Burnet, whose *Telluris Theoria Sacra* was a fanciful account of the structure of the earth.

Theory of the Earth, furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contradistinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah — (indeed a very large portion of the whole book) — is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever specific import we attach to the word, Poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved in keeping with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement, as will partake of one, though not a peculiar property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in some of the remarks on the Fancy and Imagination in the early part of this work. What is poetry? — is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? — that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control, *laxis effertur habenis*,¹ reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more

than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. Doubtless, as Sir John Davies observes of the soul — (and his words may with slight alteration be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic Imagination) —

Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
Bodies to *spirit* by sublimation strange,
As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
As we our food into our nature change.

From their gross matter she abstracts *their*
forms,
And draws a kind of quintessence from
things;
Which to her proper nature she transforms
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

Thus does she, when from *individual states*
She doth abstract the universal kinds;
Which then re-clothed in *divers names and fates*
Steal access through the senses to our minds.²

Finally, Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life, and Imagination the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

CHAPTER XVII

Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth — Rustic life (above all, low and rustic life) especially unfavorable to the formation of a human diction — The best parts of language the product of philosophers, not of clowns or shepherds — Poetry essentially ideal and generic — The language of Milton as much the language of real life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager.

As far then as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the dramatic propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of

¹ Quoted with alterations from Sir John Davies' poem *On the Soul of Man*, sect. iv.

² Is borne along with loosened reins.

thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot likewise but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible, that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conduced not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions, which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption, that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general

consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in any sense this rule is applicable only to certain classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense, as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read,) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is practicable, it is yet as a rule useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised. The poet informs his reader, that he had generally chosen low and rustic life; but not as low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy imitation of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in fact, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the representation, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an imitation as distinguished from a mere copy. The third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained, sometimes actual clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that character. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature." ¹

Now it is clear to me, that in the most

¹ From Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*.

interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as *The Brothers*, *Michael*, *Ruth*, *The Mad Mother*, and others, the persons introduced are by no means taken from low or rustic life in the common acceptance of those words! and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal I rank that independence, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, education, which has rendered few books familiar, but the Bible, and the Liturgy or Hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far accidental, that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of probability, that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned: the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing *their style*."

It is, moreover, to be considered that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, negations involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced, that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is prerequisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labors. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants: and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let

the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the farmers are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point, to which all the lines of difference converge as to their source and centre; — I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulgated in this preface. I adopt with full faith, the principle of Aristotle, that poetry, as poetry, is essentially ideal, that it avoids and excludes all accident; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of the class: not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he would possess. If my premises are right and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of *The Brothers*, and that of the shepherd of Green-head Ghyll in the *Michael*, have all the verisimilitude and representative quality, that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural

product of circumstances common to the class. Take Michael, for instance:

An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.

Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes
When others heeded not, He heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.

The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
"The winds are now devising work for me!"
And truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him

Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him and left him on the heights.

So lived he, until his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and
rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's
thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had
breathed

The common air; the hills, which he so oft
Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had
impressed

So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,
So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honorable gain; these fields, these hills
Which were his living Being, even more
Than his own blood — what could they less?
had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

On the other hand, in the poems which are
pitched in a lower key, as the *Harry Gill*, and
The Idiot Boy, the feelings are those of
human nature in general; though the poet
has judiciously laid the scene in the country,
in order to place himself in the vicinity of
interesting images, without the necessity of
ascribing a sentimental perception of their
beauty to the persons of his drama. In *The*
Idiot Boy, indeed, the mother's character is
not so much the real and native product of a
"situation where the essential passions of the
heart find a better soil, in which they can
attain their maturity and speak a plainer and
more emphatic language," as it is an im-
personation of an instinct abandoned by
judgment. Hence the two following charges

seem to me not wholly groundless: at least,
they are the only plausible objections, which
I have heard to that fine poem. The one is,
that the author has not, in the poem itself,
taken sufficient care to preclude from the
reader's fancy the disgusting images of ordi-
nary morbid idiocy, which yet it was by no
means his intention to represent. He was
even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounter-
acted by any preceding description of the
boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The
other is, that the idiocy of the boy is so
evenly balanced by the folly of the mother,
as to present to the general reader rather a
laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile
dotage, than an analytic display of maternal
affection in its ordinary workings.

In *The Thorn*, the poet himself acknowl-
edges in a note the necessity of an introduc-
tory poem, in which he should have por-
trayed the character of the person from
whom the words of the poem are supposed to
proceed: a superstitious man moderately im-
aginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings,
"a captain of a small trading vessel, for
example, who, being past the middle age of
life, had retired upon an annuity, or small
independent income, to some village or
country town of which he was not a native, or
in which he had not been accustomed to live.
Such men having nothing to do become
credulous and talkative from indolence."
But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem —
and the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* alone pre-
vents me from extending the remark even to
dramatic poetry, if indeed even the Nurse
can be deemed altogether a case in point —
it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and
garrulous discourses, without repeating the
effects of dullness and garrulity. However
this may be, I dare assert, that the parts —
(and these form the far larger portion of the
whole) — which might as well or still better
have proceeded from the poet's own imagina-
tion, and have been spoken in his own char-
acter, are those which have given, and which
will continue to give, universal delight; and
that the passages exclusively appropriate to
the supposed narrator, such as the last
couplet of the third stanza; the seven last
lines of the tenth; and the five following

1 I've measured it from side to side;
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.

2 Nay, rack your brain — 'tis all in vain,
I'll tell you every thing I know;
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond
Which is a little step beyond,
I wish that you would go:
Perhaps, when you are at the place,
You something of her tale may trace.

stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory, by which the choice of characters was to be directed, not only *a priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself need be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither

admit as particular fact, nor as general rule. "The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions." To this I reply; that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far reconstructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar — (which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials) — will not differ

I'll give you the best help I can;
Before you up the mountain go,
Up to the dreary mountain-top,
I'll tell you all I know:
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,
Her company to Stephen Hill;
And she was blithe and gay,
And she was happy, happy still
Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fixed the wedding-day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another maid
Had sworn another oath;
And, with this other maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went —
Poor Martha! on that woeeful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen;
'Tis said a child was in her womb,
As now to any eye was plain;
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often she was sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel father!

Last Christmas when they talked of this,
Old Farmer Simpson did maintain,
That in her womb the infant wrought
About its mother's heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

No more I know, I wish I did,
And I would tell it all to you:
For what became of this poor child
There's none that ever knew:
And if a child was born or no,
There's no one that could ever tell;
And if 'twas born alive or dead,
There's no one knows, as I have said;
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration — (equally important though less obvious) — that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey insulated facts, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things and modes of action requisite for his bodily conveniences would alone be individualized, while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether so distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly

said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed, nor reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes of the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to particularize many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly, such a language" — (meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism) — "arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression;" it may be answered, that the language, which he has in view, can be attributed to rustics with no greater right, than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange.¹ Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same.

¹ Obscure writers of the seventeenth century.

Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feeling.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions, which I controvert, are contained in the sentences — "a selection of the real language of men;" — "the language of these men" (that is, men in low and rustic life) "has been adopted; I have proposed to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men."

"Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be, any *essential difference*:" it is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that, which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train, of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one nor the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real" therefore, we must substitute ordinary, or *lingua communis*. And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty, as would be required in adapting to the same

purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, and barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*. Anterior to cultivation the *lingua communis* of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists every where in parts, and no where as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "in a state of excitement." For the nature of a man's words, where he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to create; but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or — (which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement) — whatever generalizations of truth or experience the heat of passion may produce; yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or, in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIII. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the apparent tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. *At her feet he bowed, he*

fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead. (Judges v, 27.)

CHAPTER XVIII

Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose — Origin and elements of metre — Its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.

I conclude, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at least understand; but likewise by following the order, in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power, by the greater disjunction and separation in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that survey, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza, on which I have chanced to open, in the *Lyrical Ballads*. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

In distant countries have I been,
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public roads, alone.
But such a one, on English ground,
And in the broad highway, I met;
Along the broad highway he came,
His cheeks with tears were wet:
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;
And in his arms a lamb he had.

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order*, in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously de-

ceived, if the following less compact mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," etc., etc. But when I turn to the following stanza in *The Thorn*:

At all times of the day and night
This wretched woman thither goes;
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows:
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits,
When the blue day-light's in the skies,
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And to herself she cries,
Oh misery! Oh misery!
Oh woe is me! Oh misery!

and compare this with the language of ordinary men; or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in real life, from such a narrator, as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences; I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which Milton, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair specimen of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

The Vision and the Faculty divine.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832)

Scott began his literary career as an antiquary and as a poet. While engaged in Edinburgh in various legal positions (he was a member of the Bar), he translated German ballads and Goethe's romantic play, *Gotz von Berlichingen*; collected popular ballads, which he published in three volumes under the title *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, 1802, 1803; and edited the mediæval romance, *Sir Tristrem*. In 1805, his literary career really began with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. Then followed the other well-known narrative poems, *Marmion*, 1808, and *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810. Two years later he built Abbotsford, near Melrose, which became his home for the rest of his life. In 1814, *Waverley*, his first novel, appeared anonymously. From that time on, partly because of Byron's growing popularity as a narrative poet, partly because of Scott's own inclination, his literary work is almost entirely in the field of the novel. These novels, too well known to be listed here, took all Britain by storm. In their blending of realistic and romantic elements, their originality of treatment, and their range of subject-matter, they were a revelation to Scott's contemporaries. Scott also edited the works of Dryden and Swift, wrote a life of Napoleon in nine volumes, and a history of Scotland. In spite of his high achievement and large output in these fields, and his great influence in the development of the novel, Scott, to many readers, is preëminently the writer of lyrics. Most of these are scattered through his novels and longer poems.

As a man, Scott was particularly lovable. His life was the embodiment of nineteenth-century romanticism in a sensible way. Anything old thrilled him. Old castles, old books delighted him. The supernatural lured him. Though lame, he reveled in the out-of-doors, especially wild landscapes. Family pride, his estate at Abbotsford, his baronetcy, were to him romantic ideals. Loyalty to a lost, but glorious, cause, like Bonnie Prince Charlie's, inspired him. Chivalry, with its code of honor, was a religion to him. In 1826 he assumed a debt of £130,000, not legally his (the result of the failure of the publishing house of Ballantyne, of which he was a silent partner), and worked prodigiously during his remaining years to pay it off. Yet, with all his aristocratic leanings, Scott had the sympathy of a Burns for the common man, and the admiration of a Byron for the sincere iconoclast.

Scott's works are easily available in various editions. The best biography is by J. G. Lockhart, his son-in-law. It is unsurpassed in its detail and its vividness. A slightly abridged version may be obtained in the Everyman's Library.

LOCHINVAR

From MARMION, CANTO V

LADY HERON'S SONG

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best,

And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none;

He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.

So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,

There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not
for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was
none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came
late: 10
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and bro-
thers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on
his sword, 15
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a
word.)
"O, come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Loch-
invar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you
denied; —
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its
tide, — 20
And now I am come, with this lost love of
mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of
wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by
far,
That would gladly be bride to the young
Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took
it up, 25
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down
the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up
to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her
eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could
bar, —
"Now tread we a measure," said young
Lochinvar. 30

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard ¹ did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did
fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his
bonnet and plume;
And the bridemaids whispered, "'Twere
better by far 35
To have matched our fair cousin with young
Lochinvar."

¹ lively dance.

One touch to her hand, and one word in her
ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the
charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprang! 40
"She is won! we are gone! over bank, bush,
and scaur;"
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth
young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the
Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they
rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie
Lee, 45
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they
see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young
Lochinvar?

Pub. 1808.

Prologue to THE LADY OF THE LAKE

Harp of the North! that moldering long hast
hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's
spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers
flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every
string — 5
Oh minstrel Harp! still must thine accents
sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmur-
ing,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence
keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to
weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon, 10
Was thy voice mute amid the festal
crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high! 15
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention
bowed;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and
Beauty's matchless eye.

¹ steep bank

Oh wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to
stray; 20

Oh wake once more! though scarce my skill
command

Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay;
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die
away,

And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway, 25
The wizard note has not been touched in
vain.

Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake
again!

Pub. 1810.

SOLDIER, REST! THY WARFARE O'ER

From THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO I

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking:

Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.

In our isle's enchanted hall, 5
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,

Every sense in slumber dewing.

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more: 10

Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,

Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch¹ summon here 15

Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.

Yet the lark's shrill fife may come

At the daybreak from the fallow,

And the bittern sound his drum, 20

Booming from the sedgy shallow.

Ruder sounds shall none be near,

Guards nor warders challenge here;

Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,

Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done, 25

While our slumbrous spells assail ye,

Dream not, with the rising sun,

Bugles here shall sound reveille.

Sleep! the deer is in his den;

Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying; 30

Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen

How thy gallant steed lay dying.

¹ wild music of the bagpipe.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;

Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye, 35

Here no bugles sound reveille.

Pub. 1810.

BOAT SONG

From THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO II

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honored and blest be the evergreen pine!
Long may the Tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our
line!

Heaven send it happy dew, 5
Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
While every highland glen

Sends our shout back agen,

"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!" 10

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the foun-
tain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf

on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her
shade.

Moored in the rifted rock, 15

Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;

Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praises again,

"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!" 20

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen
Fruin,

And Banachar's groans to our slogan re-
plied;

Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in
ruin,

And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on
her side.

Widow and Saxon maid 25

Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with
woe;

Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear again,

"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!" 30

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the High-
lands!

Stretch to your oars, for the evergreen
Pine!

¹ "Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine."

Oh! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to
twine!

Oh! that some seedling gem, 35
Worthy such noble stem,

Honored and blessed in their shadow
might grow!

Loud should Clan-Alpine then

Ring from her deepmost glen,

"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!" 40

Pub. 1810.

CORONACH¹

From THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO III

He is gone on the mountain,

He is lost to the forest,

Like a summer-dried fountain,

When our need was the sorest,

The font, re-appearing, 5

From the rain-drops shall borrow,

But to us comes no cheering,

To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper

Takes the ears that are hoary, 10

But the voice of the weeper

Wails manhood in glory;

The autumn winds rushing

Waft the leaves that are searest,

But our flower was in flushing, 15

When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,²

Sage counsel in cumber,³

Red hand in the foray,

How sound is thy slumber! 20

Like the dew on the mountain,

Like the foam on the river,

Like the bubble on the fountain,

Thou art gone, and for ever!

Pub. 1810.

BRIGNALL BANKS

From ROKEBY

CANTO III

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there

Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall,

Beneath the turrets high, 5

A maiden on the castle wall

Was singing merrily:

"O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,

And Greta woods are green; 10

I'd rather rove with Edmund there,

Than reign our English queen."

"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,

To leave both tower and town,

Thou first must guess what life lead we, 15

That dwell by dale and down.

And if thou canst that riddle read,

As read full well you may,

Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,

As blithe as Queen of May." 20

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,

And Greta woods are green;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there

Than reign our English queen.

"I read¹ you, by your bugle-horn, 25

And by your palfrey good,

I read you for a ranger sworn

To keep the king's greenwood."

"A ranger, lady, winds his horn,

And 'tis at peep of light; 30

His blast is heard at merry morn,

And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,

And Greta woods are gay;

I would I were with Edmund there, 35

To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musketoon²

So gallantly you come,

I read you for a bold dragoon,

That lists the tuck of drum." 40

"I list no more the tuck of drum,

No more the trumpet hear;

But when the beetle sounds his hum,

My comrades take the spear.

And O, though Brignall banks be fair, 45

And Greta woods be gay,

Yet mickle must the maiden dare,

Would reign my Queen of May!

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,

A nameless death I'll die; 50

The fiend whose lantern lights the mead

Were better mate than I!

And when I'm with my comrades met,

Beneath the greenwood bough,

What once we were we all forget, 55

Nor think what we are now.

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

¹ think, guess.

² short musket.

¹ Highland funeral lament.
² a hillside good for hunting.

³ trouble.

And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen." 60

Pub. 1813.

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

The first stanza is ancient. The others were written by Scott.

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride;
And ye sall be his bride, ladie, 5
Sae comely to be seen" —
But aye she loot¹ the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale; 10
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen" —
But aye she loot the tears down fa' 15
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair; 20
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen." —
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide, 25
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The lady was not seen! 30
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

Pub. 1816.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,²
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil.
Come away, come away, 5
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

1 let.

2 i.e. Donald the Black.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky, 10
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade and 15
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar; 20
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended; 25
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster, 30
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume, 35
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset! 40

Pub. 1816.

CLARION

From OLD MORTALITY

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.

Pub. 1816.

LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF

O hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers
which we see,
They are all belonging, dear babie, to thee. 5
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,¹
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc. 5

¹ The last three words, meaning "Sleep on till day," are the title of old air upon which this song is based.

O fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy re-
pose;

Their bows would be bended, their blades
would be red,

Ere the step of a foeman drew near to thy
bed.

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O hush thee, my babie, the time soon will
come,

When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet
and drum;

Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while
you may,

For strife comes with manhood, and waking
with day.

O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

1815.

PROUD MAISIE

From THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?" —

"When six braw¹ gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?" —

"The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.

The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'"

Pub. 1818.

COUNTY GUY

From QUENTIN DURWARD

Ah! County² Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.

The lark, his lay who trilled all day,
Sits hushed his partner nigh;

Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

1 fine.

2 earl.

The village maid steals through the shade,
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence know —
But where is County Guy?

Pub. 1823.

BONNY DUNDEE

John Graham of Claverhouse (Claver'se), Viscount Dundee, refused, before the Scottish Parliament (the Convention), to recognize the new king, William of Orange. He gathered a band of Jacobites and won a victory for James II at Killiecrankie, but died of wounds received in the battle.

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se
who spoke:

"Ere the King's crown shall fall there are
crowns to be broke;

So let each Cavalier who loves honor and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my
can,

Come saddle your horses and call up
your men;

Come open the West Port and let me
gang free,

And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny
Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward,¹ the drums they
are beat;

But the Provost,² douce³ man, said, "Just
e'en let him be,

The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of
Dundee."

Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the
Bow,⁴

Ilk carline⁵ was flyting⁶ and shaking her
pow;⁷

But the young plants of grace⁸ they looked
couthie⁹ and slee,¹⁰

Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny
Dundee!

Come fill up my cup, etc.

1 The chimes played backward was an alarm signal.

2 chief magistrate.

3 calm.

5 every old woman.

7 head.

9 sympathetic.

4 Bow Street in Edinburgh.

6 quarreling, scolding.

8 i.e. the young girls.

10 sly.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass market ¹
 was crammed,
 As if half the West had set tryst to be
 hanged! ²⁰
 There was spite in each look, there was fear
 in each e'e,
 As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny
 Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cows ² of Kilmarnock had spits and
 had spears,
 And lang-hafted gullies ³ to kill cavaliers; ²⁵
 But they shrunk to close-heads ⁴ and the
 causeway was free,
 At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle
 rock, ⁵
 And with the gay Gordon he gallantly
 spoke: ³⁰
 "Let Mons Meg ⁶ and her marrows ⁷ speak
 two words or three,
 For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way he
 goes —
 "Where'er shall direct me the shade of
 Montrose! ⁸ ³⁵
 Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings
 of me,
 Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dun-
 dee."
 Come fill up my cup, etc

"There are hills beyond Pentland and lands
 beyond Forth;
 If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs
 in the North; ⁴⁰
 There are wild Duniewassals ⁹ three thousand
 times three,
 Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny
 Dundee."
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barked ¹⁰
 bull-hide;

¹ A square in Edinburgh, formerly the place for execu-
 tions. See *The Heart of Midlothian*, especially the begin-
 ning of chapter 2.

² Presbyterian hoods; i.e. those opposed to the
 Stuarts.

³ knives. ⁴ blind alleys

⁵ Edinburgh Castle is on a rock towering over the
 city. At this time it was in the hands of the Duke of
 Gordon.

⁶ The nickname of a big cannon.

⁸ A Cavalier executed in 1650.

⁹ Highlanders of lower rank.

⁷ companions.

¹⁰ tanned.

There's steel in the scabbard that dangles
 beside; ⁴⁵
 The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall
 flash free,
 At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the
 rocks —
 Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the
 fox! ⁵⁰
 And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of
 your glee,
 You have not seen the last of my bonnet and
 me!"
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the trumpets
 were blown,
 The kettle-drums clashed and the horsemen
 rode on, ⁵⁵
 Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's
 lee
 Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny
 Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, come fill up my
 can,
 Come saddle the horses and call up the
 men,
 Come open your gates and let me gae
 free, ⁶⁰
 For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny
 Dundee!

December, 1825.

HERE'S A HEALTH TO KING CHARLES

From WOODSTOCK

Bring the bowl which you boast,
 Fill it up to the brim;
 'Tis to him we love most,
 And to all who love him.
 Brave gallants, stand up, ⁵
 And avaunt ye, base carles! ¹
 Were there death in the cup,
 Here's a health to King Charles.

Though he wanders through dangers,
 Unaided, unknown, ¹⁰
 Dependent on strangers,
 Estranged from his own;
 Though 'tis under our breath,
 Amidst forfeits and perils,
 Here's to honor and faith, ¹⁵
 And a health to King Charles!

¹ fellows.

Let such honors abound
As the time can afford,
The knee on the ground,
And the hand on the sword; 20

But the time shall come round
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,
The loud trumpet shall sound,
Here's a health to King Charles!

Pub. 1826.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788-1824)

George Gordon Byron was born in London, January 22, 1788, the son of "Mad Jack" Byron, who had already squandered his wife's fortune and three years later died, leaving her only a small annuity. The poet's childhood was spent in Aberdeen, where he received erratic attention from his mother, religious instruction from his nurse, and four years' training at the local grammar school. Coming into a barony unexpectedly in 1798, he was given private instruction, and in 1801 was sent to Harrow, where he spent his time at cricket and boxing, and reading prodigiously. In 1805, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, from which he received his M.A., as a peer, in 1808. Here he added swimming to his diversions, and, in general, led a care-free, jovial life, publishing, however, through the help of Hobhouse, his best friend at college and later his executor, *Fugitive Pieces* in 1806. This volume, revised and republished in 1807 under the title *Hours of Idleness*, provoked the famous attack of the *Edinburgh Review* in January, 1808. The next year Byron took his seat in the House of Lords, won instantaneous popularity with his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, and began a journey with Hobhouse which took him from Portugal to Turkey. It was on this trip that he swam the Hellespont, and became enamored of Greece. Back in London by the end of 1811, he wrote steadily, and threw himself with customary vigor and abandon into Bohemian life with new friends, chief among whom was Tom Moore. In 1812, he published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. "I awoke one morning," he said later, "and found myself famous." There followed during the next year *The Walsley*, *The Giaour*, and *The Bride of Abydos*; in 1814, *The Corsair* and *Lara*. On January 2, 1815, after having been rejected several times, he married Annabella, daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke; on January 15, 1816, less than a month after the birth of their daughter, Augusta Ada, she left the poet; and on April 25, a week after articles of separation were signed, Byron sailed, with a retinue of servants, for the Continent, never to return to England during his lifetime. That summer he spent in Switzerland with the Shelleys and Jane Clairmont, Mrs. Shelley's stepsister, writing the third canto of *Childe Harold*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, and much of *Manfred*. In the fall he went to Venice, where a child, Allegra, was born to him and Jane Clairmont. In 1819, he fell in love with the Countess Guiccioli, with whom he lived intermittently at Venice, Pisa, and Genoa until 1823. During these years he was visited by Tom Moore, Leigh Hunt, Shelley, and other Englishmen; and during these years he composed the bulk of his poetry: many lyrics, *Beppo*, *Mazeppa*, *The Vision of Judgment*, the poetic dramas, *Cain*, *Werner*, and the famous *Don Juan*.

In the summer of 1823, Byron left Italy, eager to help the Greeks in their fight for independence. While at Missolonghi, attempting to raise a regiment, he contracted a fever, and died on April 19, 1824. His body was taken to England and buried in the village church at Hucknall Torkard.

Byron, like the younger Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats in his way, and especially Shelley, was a poet of revolt. His life and his writings were a glorification of the proud hero who, in a grand, romantic manner, defied everything that confined the spirit. The strong individual had the right to wrest happiness for himself from a glorious world that was peopled with timid, unadventurous souls, cabined and confined by petty conventions.

Like Marlowe, Byron is the poet of grandeur. For energetic narrative verse he surpasses Scott (who, in the face of Byron's popularity, turned to the novel). In satire and humor and sentiment he excels all of his contemporaries. To the young Englishmen of his day, chafing against "middle-class respectability," hypocrisy, and emotional suppression, and to nearly all foreign critics, Byron, with his lusty, defiant life, and the vigorous originality of his writings, was a poet of the very first rank.

Others place him lower because of his moral tone, or because he seems at times insincere, or because less often than his contemporaries, Keats and Shelley, does he achieve the line or passage which strikes us with the inevitability of expression that results from genius. His chief faults arise from his too great facility and his tendency toward oratory. To him might be applied Yeats's statement: "We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry."

The best one-volume editions of Byron are the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company) and Murray's (London, 1905), with notes and a full introductory memoir by E. H. Coleridge. The official biography is by Tom Moore. There are other lives by K. Elze, Nichol, Noel, and L. Stephen (in the *Dictionary of National Biography*). Among the many essays on Byron may

be noted those by Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, and John Morley. For recollections of Byron and his circle, see Leigh Hunt and E. J. Trelawny.

WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow —
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me —
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well: —
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met —
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee? —
With silence and tears.

1814-16.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY¹

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;

¹ This poem and the next are from the *Hebrew Melodies*, lyrics written by Byron to be set to music. Most of these poems (like the second here) deal with incidents in the Old Testament.

Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow, 15
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

June 12, 1814.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB¹

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:

¹ See 2 Kings, xix.

And the tents were all silent — the banners
alone —
The lances unlifted — the trumpet un-
blown. 20

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their
wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of
Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the
sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the
Lord!

February 17, 1815.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

There's not a joy the world can give like that
it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in
feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush
alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere
youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the
wreck of happiness 5
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of
excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only
points in vain
The shore to which they shivered sail shall
never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like
death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not
dream its own; 10
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain
of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis
where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and
mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more
their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined tur-
ret wreath, 15
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn
and grey beneath.

Oh, could I feel as I have felt, — or be what I
have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many
a vanished scene;

As springs, in deserts found, seem sweet, all
brackish though they be,
So, midst the withered waste of life, those
tears would flow to me. 20

March, 1815.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

Childe Harold is a travel poem, perhaps the
best in the English language. It gives the
thoughts and especially the feelings aroused in
the author by the places he visits, rather than
a description of the scenes themselves. Byron
called his hero "Childe" (an appellation given
to heroes in the old ballads) "as more con-
sonant with the old structure of versification . . .
adopted." The verse-form he uses is the
Spenserian stanza.

CANTO THE THIRD

*Afin que cette application vous forçât à penser à autre chose.
Il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps.²
Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.*

I

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada!² sole daughter of my house and
heart?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they
smiled,
And then we parted, — not as now we
part,
But with a hope. —
Awaking with a start, 5
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not, but the hour's gone
by,
When Albion's³ lessening shores could grieve
or glad mine eye.

2

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a
steed 11
That knows his rider. Welcome to their
roar!
Swift be their guidance, wherso'er it lead!
Though the strained mast should quiver as
a reed,
And the rent canvass fluttering strew the
gale, 15
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,

¹ "In order that this occupation may force you to
think of something else. Truly, there is no remedy
except that (i.e., a difficult task or problem) and time."
The extract is from a letter of Frederick the Great of
Prussia to D'Alembert, the French mathematician, upon
the death of a friend of the latter's.

² Byron's daughter.

³ England's.

Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to
sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's
breath prevail.

3

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,²
The wandering outlaw of his own dark
mind;²⁰
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I
find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up
tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track be-
hind,²⁵
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life, — where not a
flower appears.

4

Since my young days of passion — joy or
pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a
string —
And both may jar: it may be, that in
vain³⁰
I would essay, as I have sung, to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling
Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful
theme.³⁶

5

He, who grown agèd in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of
life,
So that no wonder waits Him — nor below
Can Love or Sorrow, Fame, Ambition,
Strife,⁴⁰
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance — he can tell
Why Thought seeks refuge in lone caves,
yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpaired, though old, in the Soul's
haunted cell.⁴⁵

6

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now —

r i.e., Childe Harold; the first two cantos of the poem
had been published four years before.

What am I? Nothing: but not so art
thou,⁵⁰
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse
earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy
birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crushed
feelings' dearth.

7

Yet must I think less wildly: — I *have*
thought⁵⁵
Too long and darkly, till my brain be-
came,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to
tame,
My springs of life were poisoned. 'Tis too
late!⁶⁰
Yet am I changed; though still enough the
same
In strength to bear what Time cannot
abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing
Fate.

8

Something too much of this: — but now
'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal:⁶⁵
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last —
He of the breast which fain no more would
feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but
ne'er heal;
Yet Time, who changes all, had altered
him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal⁷⁰
Fire from the mind as vigor from the
limb;
And Life's enchanted cup but sparkles near
the brim.

9

His had been quaffed too quickly, and he
found
The dregs were wormwood; but he filled
again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deemed its spring perpetual — but in
vain!⁷⁶
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which galled for ever, fettering though
unseen,
And heavy though it clanked not; worn
with pain,

Which pined although it spoke not, and
grew keen, 80
Entering with every step he took through
many a scene.

10

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mixed
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deemed his spirit now so firmly fixed
And sheathed with an invulnerable mind, 85
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurked behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many
stand

Unheeded, searching through the crowd to
find

Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-worships of God and Na-
ture's hand. 90

11

But who can view the ripened rose, nor
seek

To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of Beauty's
cheek,

Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through
clouds unfold 95

The star which rises o'er her steep, nor
climb?

Harold, once more within the vortex, rolled
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's
fond prime.

12

But soon he knew himself the most
unfit 100

Of men to herd with Man, with whom he
held

Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was
quelled

In youth by his own thoughts; still un-
compelled,

He would not yield dominion of his
mind 105

To Spirits against whom his own rebelled,
Proud though in desolation — which could
find

A life within itself, to breathe without man-
kind.

13

Where rose the mountains, there to him
were friends;

Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his
home; 110

Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, ex-
tends,

He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the
tome 115

Of his land's tongue, which he would oft
forsake

For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams on
the lake.

14

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the
stars,

Till he had peopled them with beings
bright

As their own beams; and earth, and earth-
born jars, 120

And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that
flight

He had been happy; but this clay will
sink

Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the
link 125

That keeps us from yon heaven which woos
us to its brink.

15

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wear-
some,

Drooped as a wild-born falcon with clipped
wing,

To whom the boundless air alone were
home; 130

Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat

His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage — so the
heat

Of his impeded Soul would through his bosom
eat. 135

16

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of Hope left, but with less of
gloom;

The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness as-
sume, 140

Which, though 'twere wild, — as on the
plundered wreck

When mariners would madly meet their
doom

With draughts imtemperate on the sinking
deck, —
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to
check.

17

Stop! — for thy tread is on an Empire's
dust!

An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchered be-
low!

Is the spot marked with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None;¹ but *the moral's truth* tells simpler
so.

As the ground was before, thus let it
be; —

How that red rain hath made the harvest
grow!

And is this all the world has gained by thee,
Thou first and last of Fields! king-making
Victory?

18

And Harold stands upon this place of
skulls,

The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
How in an hour the Power which gave
annuls

Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In "pride of place"² here last the eagle³
flew,

Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations
through;

Ambition's life and labors all were vain;
He wears⁴ the shattered links of the world's
broken chain.

19

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters; — but is Earth more
free?

Did nations combat to make *One* sub-
mit?

Or league to teach all Kings true Sover-
eignty?

What! shall reviving Thralldom again be
The patched-up Idol of enlightened days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall
we

Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly
gaze

And servile knees to Thrones? No; *prove*
before ye praise!

¹ The monument on the field of Waterloo was erected
later.

² The highest point in flight, — a term in falconry.

³ Napoleon.

⁴ Napoleon was then en route to St. Helena.

20

If not, o'er one fallen Despot boast no
more!

In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot
tears

For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain,
years

Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the
accord

Of roused-up millions; all that most en-
dears

Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a
sword

Such as Harmodius¹ drew on Athens' tyrant
lord.

21

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and
brave men;²

A thousand hearts beat happily; and
when

Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake
again,

And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a
rising knell!

22

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the
Wind,

Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfin'd;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and
Pleasure meet

To chase the glowing Hours with flying
feet —

But hark! — that heavy sound breaks in
once more,

As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer — clearer — deadlier than be-
fore!

Arm! Arm! it is — it is — the cannon's
opening roar!

23

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain;³ he did
hear

¹ He killed the tyrant Hipparchus with a sword hidden
in myrtle leaves.

² At the Duchess of Richmond's ball.

³ The Duke of Brunswick, nephew of George III, who
fell in the very beginning of the battle.

That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;

And when they smiled because he deemed it near,

His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father¹ on a bloody bier, ²⁰⁵

And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;

He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

24

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,

And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness; ²¹¹

And there were sudden partings, such as press

The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs

Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess

If ever more should meet those mutual eyes, ²¹⁵

Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!²

25

And there was mounting in hot haste — the steed,

The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,

Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,

And swiftly forming in the ranks of war — ²²⁰

And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum

Roused up the soldier ere the Morning Star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,

Or whispering, with white lips — "The foe! they come! they come!" ²²⁵

26

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" ³ rose!

The war-note of Lochiel,⁴ which Albyn's ⁵ hills

Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes: —

How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,

Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills ²³⁰

Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers

With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,

And Evan's — Donald's — fame rings in each clansman's ears!

27

And Ardennes¹ waves above them her green leaves, ²³⁵

Dewy with Nature's tear-drops as they pass,

Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!

Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but *above* shall grow ²⁴⁰

In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living Valor, rolling on the foe

And burning with high Hope shall molder cold and low.

28

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay, ²⁴⁵

The Midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,

The Morn the marshaling in arms, — the Day

Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which

when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay, ²⁵⁰

Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,

Rider and horse, — friend, — foe, — in one red burial blent!

29

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps than mine;

Yet one I would select from that proud throng,

Partly because they blend me with his line, ²⁵⁵

And partly that I did his Sire some wrong,

And partly that bright names will hallow song;

And his was of the bravest, and when showered

¹ Killed at Auerbach in 1806.

² Compare Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, chapters 29 ff.

³ The war-song of Clan Cameron.

⁴ The chief of the clan.

⁵ Scotland's.

¹ Woods near the battlefield, supposed to be the forest of Arden of Shakespeare.

The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files
 along,
 Even where the thickest of War's tempest
 lowered, ²⁶⁰
 They reached no nobler breast than thine,
 young gallant Howard! ¹

30
 There have been tears and breaking hearts
 for thee,
 And mine were nothing had I such to give;
 But when I stood beneath the fresh green
 tree,
 Which living waves where thou didst cease
 to live, ²⁶⁵
 And saw around me the wide field revive
 With fruits and fertile promise, and the
 Spring
 Came forth her work of gladness to con-
 trive,
 With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
 I turned from all she brought to those she
 could not bring. ²⁷⁰

31
 I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom
 each
 And one as all a ghastly gap did make
 In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
 Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
 The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must
 awake ²⁷⁵
 Those whom they thirst for; though the
 sound of Fame.
 May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
 The fever of vain longing, and the name
 So honored but assumes a stronger, bitterer
 claim.

32
 They mourn, but smile at length — and,
 smiling, mourn: ²⁸⁰
 The tree will wither long before it fall;
 The hull drives on, though mast and sail
 be torn;
 The roof-tree sinks, but molders on the
 hall
 In massy hoariness; the ruined wall
 Stands when its wind-worn battlements
 are gone; ²⁸⁵
 The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
 The day drags through, though storms
 keep out the sun;
 And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly
 live on:

¹ The third son of Byron's guardian, the Earl of Carlisle, a distant relative. For the wrong Byron did the Earl, see *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

33
 Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
 In every fragment multiplies — and makes
 A thousand images of one that was ²⁹¹
 The same — and still the more, the more it
 breaks;
 And thus the heart will do which not for-
 sakes,
 Living in shattered guise; and still, and
 cold,
 And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow
 aches, ²⁹⁵
 Yet withers on till all without is old,
 Showing no visible sign, for such things are
 untold.

34
 There is a very life in our despair,
 Vitality of poison, — a quick root
 Which feeds these deadly branches; for it
 were ³⁰⁰
 As nothing did we die; but Life will suit
 Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
 Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's
 shore,
 All ashes to the taste: Did man compute
 Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er ³⁰⁵
 Such hours 'gainst years of life, — say, would
 he name threescore?

35
 The Psalmist numbered out the years of
 man:
 They are enough; and if thy tale be *true*,
 Thou, who didst grudge him even that
 fleeting span,
 More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo! ³¹⁰
 Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
 Their children's lips shall echo them, and
 say —
 "Here, where the sword united nations
 drew,
 Our countrymen were warring on that
 day!"
 And this is much — and all — which will not
 pass away. ³¹⁵

36
 There sunk the greatest,¹ nor the worst of
 men,
 Whose Spirit, antithetically mixed,
 One moment of the mightiest, and again
 On little objects with like firmness fixed;
 Extreme in all things! hadst thou been
 betwixt, ³²⁰
 Thy throne had still been thine, or never
 been;

¹ Napoleon.

For daring made thy rise as fall: thou
seek'st

Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer
of the scene!

37

Conqueror and Captive of the Earth art
thou!

She trembles at thee still, and thy wild
name

Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds
than now

That thou art nothing, save the jest of
Fame,

Who wooed thee once, thy Vassal, and
became

The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou
wert

A god unto thyself; nor less the same

To the astounded kingdoms all inert,

Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou
didst assert.

38

Oh, more or less than man — in high or
low —

Battling with nations, flying from the
field;

Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-
stool, now

More than thy meanest soldier taught to
yield;

An Empire thou couldst crush, command,
rebuild,

But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skilled,

Look through thine own, nor curb the lust
of War,

Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the
loftiest Star.

39

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning
tide

With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it Wisdom, Coldness, or deep

Pride,

Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard

by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou
hast smiled

With a sedate and all-enduring eye; —
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favorite

child,

He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him
piled.

40

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could
contemn

Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel,
not so

To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to
use

Till they were turned unto thine over-
throw:

'Tis but a worthless world • to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot
who choose.

41

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall
alone,

Such scorn of man had helped to brave the
shock;

But men's thoughts were the steps which
paved thy throne,

Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son¹ was thine, not
then

(Unless aside thy Purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;

For scepter'd Cynics Earth were far too wide
a den.

42

But Quiet to quick bosoms is a Hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a
fire

And motion of the Soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;

And, but once kindled, quenchless ever-
more,

Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,

Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

43

This makes the madmen who have made
men mad

By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom
add

Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet
things

Which stir too strongly the soul's secret
springs,

And are themselves the fools to those they
fool;

¹ Alexander the Great, son of Philip of Macedon.

Envid, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a
school ³⁸⁶
Which would unteach Mankind the lust to
shine or rule:

44

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife, ³⁹⁰
That should their days, surviving perils
past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid
by, ³⁹⁵
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

45

He who ascends to mountain tops, shall
find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds
and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those
below. ⁴⁰⁰
Though high *above* the Sun of Glory glow,
And far *beneath* the Earth and Ocean
spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those
summits led. ⁴⁰⁵

46

Away with these! true Wisdom's world
will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine, ⁴¹⁰
A blending of all beauties; streams and
dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, moun-
tain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern fare-
wells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin
greenly dwells.

47

And there they stand, as stands a lofty
mind, ⁴¹⁵
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying Wind,
Or holding dark communion with the
Cloud.

There was a day when they were young
and proud;
Banners on high, and battles passed
below; ⁴²⁰
But they who fought are in a bloody
shroud,
And those which waved are shredless
dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no
future blow.

48

Beneath those battlements, within those
walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud
state ⁴²⁵
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws conquerors
should have,
But History's purchased page to call them
great? ⁴³⁰
A wider space — an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls
were full as brave.

49

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their
shields, ⁴³⁵
With emblems well devised by amorous
pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would
glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and
drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief
won, ⁴⁴⁰
Saw the discolored Rhine beneath its ruin run.

50

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would en-
dure for ever
Could man but leave thy bright creation
so, ⁴⁴⁵
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict, — then
to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven — and to seem
such to me,
Even now what wants thy stream? — that it
should Lethe be. ⁴⁵⁰

51

A thousand battles have assailed thy banks,
 But these and half their fame have passed
 away,
 And Slaughter heaped on high his welter-
 ing ranks:
 Their very graves are gone, and what are
 they?
 Thy tide washed down the blood of yester-
 day,
 And all was stainless, and on thy clear
 stream
 Glassed, with its dancing light, the sunny
 ray;
 But o'er the blackened Memory's blighting
 dream
 Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as
 they seem.

52

Thus Harold inly said, and passed along,
 Yet not insensible to all which here
 Awoke the jocund birds to early song
 In glens which might have made even exile
 dear:
 Though on his brow were graven lines
 austere,
 And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en
 the place
 Of feelings fierier far but less severe —
 Joy was not always absent from his face,
 But o'er it in such scenes would steal with
 transient trace.

53

Nor was all Love shut from him, though
 his days
 Of Passion had consumed themselves to
 dust.
 It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
 On such as smile upon us; the heart must
 Leap kindly back to kindness, though Dis-
 gust
 Hath weaned it from all worldings: thus
 he felt,
 For there was soft Remembrance, and
 sweet Trust
 In one fond breast,¹ to which his own
 would melt,
 And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom
 dwelt.

54

And he had learned to love, — I know not
 why,
 For this in such as him seems strange of
 mood, —

¹ Byron's half-sister Augusta, by his father's first marriage.

The helpless looks of blooming Infancy,
 Even in its earliest nurture; what sub-
 dued,
 To change like this, a mind so far imbued
 With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
 But thus it was; and though in solitude
 Small power the nipped affections have to
 grow,
 In him this glowed when all beside had ceased
 to glow.

55

And there was one soft breast, as hath
 been said,
 Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
 Than the church links withal; and, though
 unwed,
 That love was pure — and, far above dis-
 guise,
 Had stood the test of mortal enmities,
 Still undivided, and cemented more
 By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
 But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
 Well to that heart might his these absent
 greetings pour!

I

The castled crag of Drachenfels
 Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
 Whose breast of waters broadly swells
 Between the banks which bear the vine;
 And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
 And fields which promise corn and wine,
 And scattered cities crowning these,
 Whose far white walls along them shine,
 Have strewed a scene, which I should see
 With double joy wert *thou* with me.

II

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
 And hands which offer early flowers,
 Walk smiling o'er this Paradise;
 Above, the frequent feudal towers
 Through green leaves lift their walls of
 gray;
 And many a rock which steeply lowers,
 And noble arch in proud decay,
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
 But one thing want these banks of
 Rhine, —
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

III

I send the lilies given to me —
 Though long before thy hand they touch,
 I know that they must withered be,
 But yet reject them not as such;
 For I have cherished them as dear,

Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here —
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,
And offered from my heart to thine! 525

IV

The river nobly foams and flows —
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might
bound 530

Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To Nature and to me so dear —
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

56

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground, 536
There is a small and simple Pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant
mound;

Beneath its base are Heroes' ashes hid —
Our enemy's — but let not that forbid
Honor to Marceau!¹ o'er whose early
tomb 541

Tears, big tears, gushed from the rough
soldier's lid,

Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled
to resume.

57

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young
career, — 545

His mourners were two hosts, his friends
and foes;

And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant Spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's Champion, one of
those

The few in number, who had not o'er-
stepped 550

The charter to chastise which she be-
stows

On such as wield her weapons; he had
kept

The whiteness of his soul — and thus men
o'er him wept.

58

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shattered
wall

Black with the miner's blast, upon her
height 555

¹ A general of the French Revolutionary armies.

Yet shows of what she was, when shell and
ball

Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
A Tower of Victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watched along the
plain:

But Peace destroyed what War could
never blight, 560

And laid those proud roofs bare to Sum-
mer's rain —

On which the iron shower for years had
poured in vain.

59

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long de-
lighted

The stranger fain would linger on his
way!

Thine is a scene alike where souls united, 565
Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to
prey

On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too somber nor too
gay,

Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the
year. 571

60

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!

There can be no farewell to scene like
thine;

The mind is colored by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign 575
Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely
Rhine!

'Tis with the thankful heart of parting
praise;

More mighty spots may rise — more glar-
ing shine,

But none unite in one attaching maze,
The brilliant, fair, and soft, — the glories of
old days. 580

61

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls
between, —

The wild rocks shaped, as they had turrets
been, 585

In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,

Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though Em-
pires near them fall. 589

62

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy
scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold Sublimity, where forms and falls
The Avalanche — the thunderbolt of
snow! 595
All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave
vain man below.

63

But ere these matchless heights I dare to
scan,
There is a spot should not be passed in
vain, — 600
Morat!¹ the proud, the patriot field!
where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquered on that
plain;
Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless
host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain, 605
Themselves their monument; — the Sty-
gian coast
Unsepulchered they roamed, and shrieked
each wandering ghost.

64

While Waterloo with Cannæ's² carnage
vies,
Morat and Marathon³ twin names shall
stand; 609
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely
cause
Of vice-entailed Corruption; they no land
Doomed to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making Kings' rights divine, by some Dra-
conic⁴ clause. 616

65

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild-bewildered
gaze 620

¹ The town where the Swiss defeated Charles the Bold of Burgundy in 1476.

² Where Hannibal defeated the Romans in 216 B.C.

³ Scene of the famous victory of the Greeks over the Persians in 490 B.C.

⁴ The code of Draco, earliest of Athenian lawmakers, was extremely rigid and severe.

Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it
stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Leveled Aventicum,¹ hath strewed her sub-
ject lands. 625

66

And there — oh! sweet and sacred be the
name!
Julia² — the daughter — the devoted —
gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath
a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's
grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers
would crave 630
The life she lived in — but the judge was
just —
And then she died on him she could not
save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a
bust,
And held within their urn one mind — one
heart — one dust.

67

But these are deeds which should not pass
away, 635
And names that must not wither, though
the Earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved — their
death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of Worth
Should be — and shall, survivor of its
woe, 640
And from its immortality, look forth
In the Sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,³
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

68

Lake Leman⁴ woos me with its crystal
face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains
view 645
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height
and hue:
There is too much of Man here, to look
through
With a fit mind the might which I behold;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew

¹ Capital city of Roman Switzerland.

² A young priestess of Aventicum who died after trying in vain to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor.

³ Mount Blanc.

⁴ Geneva.

Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than
 of old, 651
 Ere mingling with the herd had penned me
 in their fold.

69

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind:
 All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
 Nor is it discontent to keep the mind 655
 Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
 In the hot throng, where we become the
 spoil
 Of our infection, till too late and long,
 We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
 In wretched interchange of wrong for
 wrong 660
 Midst a contentious world, striving where
 none are strong.

70

There, in a moment, we may plunge our
 years
 In fatal penitence, and in the blight
 Of our own Soul turn all our blood to tears,
 And color things to come with hues of
 Night; 665
 The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
 To those that walk in darkness: on the sea
 The boldest steer but where their ports
 invite —
 But there are wanderers o'er Eternity,
 Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored
 ne'er shall be. 670

71

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
 And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
 By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
 Or the pure bosom of its nursing Lake,
 Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
 A fair but froward infant her own care, 676
 Kissing its cries away as these awake; —
 Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
 Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to
 inflict or bear?

72

I live not in myself, but I become 680
 Portion of that around me; and to me
 High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
 Of human cities torture: I can see
 Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be
 A link reluctant in a fleshly chain, 685
 Classed among creatures, when the soul
 can flee,
 And with the sky — the peak — the heav-
 ing plain
 Of ocean, or the stars, mingle — and not in
 vain.

73

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life:
 I look upon the peopled desert past, 690
 As on a place of agony and strife,
 Where, for some sin, to Sorrow I was cast,
 To act and suffer, but remount at last
 With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
 Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the
 Blast 695
 Which it would cope with, on delighted
 wing,
 Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round
 our being cling.

74

And when, at length, the mind shall be all
 free
 From what it hates in this degraded form,
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
 Existent happier in the fly and worm, — 701
 When Elements to Elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
 The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each
 spot? 705
 Of which, even now, I share at times the
 immortal lot?

75

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a
 part
 Of me and of my Soul, as I of them?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart
 With a pure passion? should I not contemn
 All objects, if compared with these? and
 stem 711
 A tide of suffering, rather than forgo
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly
 phlegm
 Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts
 which dare not glow? 715

76

But this is not my theme; and I return
 To that which is immediate, and require
 Those who find contemplation in the urn,
 To look on One,¹ whose dust was once all
 fire,
 A native of the land where I respire 720
 The clear air for a while — a passing guest,
 Where he became a being, — whose desire
 Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
 The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all
 rest.

¹ Jean Jacques Rousseau, 1712-78, native and for a long time resident of Geneva, noted champion of the return to nature, author of *Julie*, or the *New Héloïse* and the *Confessions*; his influence upon social thought in France, Germany, and England has been extensive.

77

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rous-
seau, 725

The apostle of Affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over Passion, and from Woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched;
yet he knew

How to make Madness beautiful, and
cast 730

O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly
hue

Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they
passed

The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly
and fast.

78

His love was Passion's essence — as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame 735
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamored, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal Beauty, which became 740
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distempered though
it seems.

79

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss 745
Which every morn his fevered lip would
greet,

From hers, who but with friendship his
would meet;¹

But to that gentle touch through brain
and breast

Flashed the thrilled Spirit's love-devouring
heat;

In that absorbing sigh perchance more
blessed 750

Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek
possessed.

80

His life was one long war with self-sought
foes,

Or friends by him self-banished; for his
mind

Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and
chose,

For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind, 755

¹ This refers to the account, in his *Confessions*, of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot, . . . and his long walk every morning, for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance.
— Byron.

'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange
and blind.

But he was frenzied, — wherefore, who
may know?

Since cause might be which Skill could
never find;

But he was frenzied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a
reasoning show. 760

81

For then he was inspired, and from him
came,

As from the Pythian's mystic cave¹ of
yore,

Those oracles which set the world in
flame,

Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no
more:

Did he not this for France? which lay,
before, 765

Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?

Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers

Roused up to too much wrath, which follows
o'ergrown fears?

82

They made themselves a fearful monu-
ment! 770

The wreck of old opinions — things which
grew,

Breathed from the birth of Time: the veil
they rent,

And what behind it lay, all earth shall
view;

But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild

Upon the same foundation, and renew 776

Dungeons and thrones, which the same
hour refilled,

As heretofore, because Ambition was self-
willed.

83

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and

made it felt. 780

They might have used it better, but, al-
lured

By their new vigor, sternly have they dealt
On one another; Pity ceased to melt

With her once natural charities. But
they,

Who in Oppression's darkness caved had
dwelt, 785

¹ The Delphic oracle of Apollo; the Pythia was the priestess in charge.

They were not eagles, nourished with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

84

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war 790
With their own hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came — it cometh — and will come, — the power 795
To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be slower.

85

Clear, placid Lemian! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring. 800
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn Ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice re-proved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved. 805

86

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capped heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore, 811
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

87

He is an evening reveler, who makes 815
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;

At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the Starlight dew
All silently their tears of Love instill, 821
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

88

Ye Stars! which are the poetry of Heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate 825
Of men and empires, — 'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A Beauty and a Mystery, and create 830
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That Fortune, Fame, Power, Life, have named themselves a star.

89

All Heaven and Earth are still — though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep: — 835
All Heaven and Earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-coast,
All is concentrated in a life intense.
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of Being, and a sense 840
Of that which is of all Creator and Defense.

90

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone, 845
The soul and source of Music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,¹
Binding all things with beauty; — 'twould disarm
The specter Death, had he substantial power to harm. 850

91

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak

¹ The girdle of Venus, which was supposed to strike love in the beholder.

Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus
take

A fit and unvalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are
weak, 855

Upread of human hands. Come, and
compare

Columns and idol-dwellings — Goth or
Greek —

With Nature's realms of worship, earth
and air —

Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy
prayer!

92

The sky is changed! — and such a change!
Oh, Night, 860

And Storm, and Darkness, ye are wondrous
strong,

Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in Woman! Far along,

From peak to peak, the rattling crags
among

Leaps the live thunder! Not from one
lone cloud, 865

But every mountain now hath found a
tongue,

And Jura answers, through her misty
shroud,

Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her
aloud!

93

And this is in the Night: — Most glorious
Night!

Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me
be 870

A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —
A portion of the tempest and of thee!

How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the
earth!

And now again 'tis black, — and now, the
glee 875

Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-
mirth,

As if they did rejoice o'er a young Earth-
quake's birth.

94

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his
way between

Heights which appear as lovers who have
parted

In hate, whose mining depths so inter-
vene, 880

That they can meet no more, though
broken-hearted:

Though in their souls, which thus each
other thwarted,

Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and
then departed: —

Itself expired, but leaving them an age 885
Of years all winters, — war within themselves
to wage:

95

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath
cleft his way,

The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en
his stand:

For here, not one, but many, make their
play,

And fling their thunder-bolts from hand
to hand, 890

Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills
hath forked

His lightnings, — as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as Desolation worked,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever
therein lurked. 895

96

Sky, Mountains, River, Winds, Lake, Light-
nings! ye!

With night, and clouds, and thunder, and
a Soul

To make these felt and feeling, well may
be

Things that have made me watchful; the
far roll

Of thy departing voices, is the knoll 900
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.

But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?

Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some
high nest?

97

Could I embody and unbosom now 905
That which is most within me, — could

I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus
throw

Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong
or weak,

All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel — and yet breathe — into

one word, 910
And that one word were Lightning, I would
speak;

But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it
as a sword.

98

The Morn is up again, the dewy Morn,
 With breath all incense, and with cheek all
 bloom —
 Laughing the clouds away with playful
 scorn,
 And living as if earth contained no
 tomb, —
 And glowing into day: we may resume
 The march of our existence: and thus I,
 Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find
 room
 And food for meditation, nor pass by
 Much, that may give us pause, if pondered
 fittingly.

99

Clarens!¹ sweet Clarens, birthplace of
 deep Love!
 Thine air is the young breath of passionate
 Thought;
 Thy trees take root in Love; the snows
 above,
 The very Glaciers have his colors caught,
 And Sun-set into rose-hues sees them
 wrought
 By rays which sleep there lovingly: the
 rocks,
 The permanent crags, tell here of Love,
 who sought
 In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
 Which stir and sting the Soul with Hope that
 woos, then mocks.

100

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are
 trod, —
 Undying Love's, who here ascends a
 throne
 To which the steps are mountains; where
 the God
 Is a pervading Life and Light, — so shown
 Not on those summits solely, nor alone
 In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
 His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath
 blown,
 His soft and summer breath, whose tender
 power
 Passes the strength of storms in their most
 desolate hour.

101

All things are here of *him*; from the black
 pines,
 Which are his shade on high, and the loud
 roar
 Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines

¹ A town on Lake Geneva, often mentioned in Rousseau.

Which slope his green path downward to
 the shore,
 Where the bowed waters meet him, and
 adore,
 Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the
 wood,
 The covert of old trees, with trunks all
 hoar,
 But light leaves, young as joy, stands
 where it stood,
 Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

102

A populous solitude of bees and birds
 And fairy-formed and many-colored things,
 Who worship him with notes more sweet
 than words,
 And innocently open their glad wings,
 Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
 And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
 Of stirring branches, and the bud which
 brings
 The swiftest thought of Beauty, here
 extend
 Mingling, and made by Love, unto one
 mighty end.

103

He who hath loved not, here would learn
 that lore,
 And make his heart a spirit; he who
 knows
 That tender mystery, will love the more;
 For this is Love's recess, where vain men's
 woes,
 And the world's waste, have driven him
 far from those,
 For 'tis his nature to advance or die;
 He stands not still, but or decays, or
 grows
 Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
 With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

104

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau¹ this
 spot,
 Peopling it with affections; but he found
 It was the scene which Passion must
 allot
 To the Mind's purified beings; 'twas the
 ground
 Where early Love his Psyche's zone un-
 bound,
 And hallowed it with loveliness: 'tis
 lone,
 And wonderful, and deep, and hath a
 sound,

¹ In his *Julie*.

And sense, and sight of sweetness; here
the Rhone 975
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have
reared a throne.

105

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the
abodes
Of Names¹ which unto you bequeathed a
name;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dan-
gerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of Fame: 980
They were gigantic minds, and their steep
aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder
and the flame
Of Heaven again assailed — if Heaven the
while
On man and man's research could deign do
more than smile. 985

106

The one² was fire and fickleness, a child
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various, — gay, grave, sage, or
wild, —
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind, 990
The Proteus³ of their talents: But his own
Breathed most in ridicule, — which, as the
wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things
prone, —
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a
throne.

107

The other, deep and slow, exhausting
thought, 995
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge
severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony, — that master spell, 1000
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew
from fear,
And doomed him to the zealot's ready
Hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently
well.

¹ Gibbon finished his *Decline and Fall* at Lausanne in 1788. See Thomas Hardy's poem, *Lausanne*. In *Gibbon's Old Garden*. Voltaire lived almost the entire last nine years of his life at Ferney.

² Voltaire, 1694–1778.

³ Proteus, the sea god, could change himself into many shapes.

108

Yet, peace be with their ashes, — for by
them,
If merited, the penalty is paid; 1005
It is not ours to judge, — far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things
shall be made
Known unto all, — or hope and dread
allayed
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie
decayed; 1010
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven — or suffer what is
just.

109

But let me quit Man's works, again to read
His Maker's, spread around me, and sus-
pend 1014
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps
tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey what-
e'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region,
where 1020
The earth to her embrace compels the powers
of air.

110

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the Soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won
thee,
To the last halo of the Chiefs and Sages 1025
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of em-
pires — still,
The fount at which the panting Mind as-
suages
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her
fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's im-
perial hill. 1030

111

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renewed with no kind auspices: — to feel
We are not what we have been, and to
deem
We are not what we should be, — and to
steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal, 1035
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or
aught, —

Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal,
Which is the tyrant Spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul: — No matter, — it is
taught. 1039

112

And for these words, thus woven into
song,

It may be that they are a harmless wile, —
The coloring of the scenes which fleet
along,

Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth, — but I am
not 1045

So young as to regard men's frown or
smile,

As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot; —
I stood and stand alone, — remembered or
forgot.

113

I have not loved the World, nor the World
me;

I have not flattered its rank breath, nor
bowed 1050

To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coined my cheek to smiles, — nor cried
aloud

In worship of an echo: in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such — I
stood

Among them, but not of them — in a
shroud 1055

Of thoughts which were not their thoughts,
and still could,

Had I not filed¹ my mind, which thus itself
subdued.

114

I have not loved the World, nor the World
me, —

But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there
may be 1060

Words which are things, — hopes which
will not deceive,

And Virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing; I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely
grieve —

That two, or one, are almost what they
seem, — 1065

That Goodness is no name — and Happiness
no dream.

¹ defiled; Byron quotes in a note, *Macbeth*, III, i:

— "If 't be so,

For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind."

115

My daughter! with thy name this song
begun!

My daughter! with thy name thus much
shall end! —

I see thee not — I hear thee not — but none
Can be so wrapped in thee; thou art the
Friend 1070

To whom the shadows of far years extend:
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions
blend,

And reach into thy heart, — when mine is
cold, —

A token and a tone, even from thy father's
mould. 1075

116

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects, — wonders yet to
thee!

To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee, 1080
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's
kiss, —

This, it should seem, was not reserved for
me — ¹

Yet this was in my nature: as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like
to this.

117

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be
taught,² 1085

I know that thou wilt love me — though
my name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still
fraught

With desolation, and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us, —
'twere the same,

I know that thou wilt love me — though
to drain 1090

My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment, — all would be in
vain, —

Still thou wouldst love me, still that more
than life retain.

118

The child of Love, though born in bitter-
ness,

And nurtured in Convulsion. Of thy
sire 1095

¹ Byron never saw his daughter Ada after her childhood. She died at thirty-seven, and was buried next to her father.

² Byron here is referring to his wife.

These were the elements, — and thine no less.

As yet such are around thee, — but thy fire

Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far higher.

Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea

And from the mountains where I now respire, 1100

Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee, As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me.

May-June, 1816.

SONNET ON CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!

Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art:

For there thy habitation is the heart —

The heart which love of thee alone can bind;

And when thy sons to fetters are con- signed — 5

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,

Their country conquers with their martyr- dom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,

And thy sad floor an altar — for 't was trod, 10

Until his very steps have left a trace

Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,

By Bonivard! — May none those marks efface!

For they appeal from tyranny to God.

June, 1816.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

François de Bonivard, 1496–1570, fought against the Duke of Savoy for the freedom of Geneva. He was imprisoned in Chillon from 1530 to 1536, being released when Geneva became republican. During the rest of his life he worked to make Geneva an educational centre. He is said to have done much towards founding the public library and the university.

Byron's poem, of course, is largely imaginary.

I

My hair is gray, but not with years,

Nor grew it white

In a single night,

As men's have grown from sudden fears.

1 The well-known castle on the edge of Lake Geneva, just outside Geneva, owned at this time by the Duke of Savoy, who controlled the city.

My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,

But rusted with a vile repose,

For they have been a dungeon's spoil,

And mine has been the fate of those

To whom the goodly earth and air

Are banned, and barred — forbidden fare; 10

But this was for my father's faith

I suffered chains and courted death;

That father perished at the stake

For tenets he would not forsake;

And for the same his lineal race 15

In darkness found a dwelling-place;

We were seven — who now are one,

Six in youth, and one in age,

Finished as they had begun,

Proud of Persecution's rage; 20

One in fire, and two in field,

Their belief with blood have sealed,

Dying as their father died,

For the God their foes denied; —

Three were in a dungeon cast, 25

Of whom this wreck is left the last.

2

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould

In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,

There are seven columns, massy and gray,

Dim with a dull imprisoned ray, 30

A sunbeam which hath lost its way,

And through the crevice and the cleft

Of the thick wall is fallen and left;

Creeping o'er the floor so damp,

Like a marsh's meteor lamp: 35

And in each pillar there is a ring,

And in each ring there is a chain;

That iron is a cankering thing,

For in these limbs its teeth remain,

With marks that will not wear away, 40

Till I have done with this new day,

Which now is painful to these eyes,

Which have not seen the sun so rise

For years — I cannot count them o'er,

I lost their long and heavy score 45

When my last brother drooped and died,

And I lay living by his side.

3

They chained us each to a column stone,

And we were three — yet, each alone;

We could not move a single pace, 50

We could not see each other's face,

But with that pale and livid light

That made us strangers in our sight:

And thus together — yet apart,

Fettered in hand, but joined in heart, 55

'T was still some solace in the dearth

Of the pure elements of earth,

To hearken to each other's speech,
 And each turn comforter to each
 With some new hope, or legend old, 60
 Or song heroically bold;
 But even these at length grew cold.
 Our voices took a dreary tone,
 An echo of the dungeon stone,
 A grating sound — not full and free 65
 As they of yore were wont to be;
 It might be fancy — but to me
 They never sounded like our own.

4

I was the eldest of the three,
 And to uphold and cheer the rest 70
 I ought to do — and did my best —
 And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,
 Because our mother's brow was given
 To him — with eyes as blue as heaven — 75
 For him my soul was sorely moved:
 And truly might it be distressed
 To see such bird in such a nest;
 For he was beautiful as day —

(When day was beautiful to me 80
 As to young eagles, being free) —
 A polar day, which will not see
 A sunset till its summer's gone,
 Its sleepless summer of long light,
 The snow-clad offspring of the sun: 85
 And thus he was as pure and bright,
 And in his natural spirit gay,
 With tears for naught but others' ills,
 And then they flowed like mountain rills,
 Unless he could assuage the woe 90
 Which he abhorred to view below.

5

The other was as pure of mind,
 But formed to combat with his kind;
 Strong in his frame, and of a mood
 Which 'gainst the world in war had stood, 95
 And perished in the foremost rank

With joy: — but not in chains to pine:
 His spirit withered with their clank,
 I saw it silently decline —

And so perchance in sooth did mine: 100
 But yet I forced it on to cheer
 Those relics of a home so dear.
 He was a hunter of the hills,

Had followed there the deer and wolf;
 To him this dungeon was a gulf, 105
 And fettered feet the worst of ills.

6

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
 A thousand feet in depth below
 Its massy waters meet and flow;

Thus much the fathom-line was sent 110
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
 Which round about the wave intrals:
 A double dungeon wall and wave
 Have made — and like a living grave.
 Below the surface of the lake 115
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay:
 We heard it ripple night and day;
 Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
 And I have felt the winter's spray
 Wash through the bars when winds were 120
 high

And wanton in the happy sky;
 And then the very rock hath rocked,
 And I have felt it shake, unshocked,
 Because I could have smiled to see
 The death that would have set me free. 125

7

I said my nearer brother pined,
 I said his mighty heart declined,
 He loathed and put away his food;
 It was not that 't was coarse and rude, 130
 For we were used to hunter's fare,
 And for the like had little care:

The milk drawn from the mountain goat
 Was changed for water from the moat,
 Our bread was such as captive's tears
 Have moistened many a thousand years, 135
 Since man first pent his fellow men
 Like brutes within an iron den;
 But what were these to us or him?
 These wasted not his heart or limb;
 My brother's soul was of that mould 140
 Which in a palace had grown cold,
 Had his free breathing been denied
 The range of the steep mountain's side;
 But why delay the truth? — he died.

I saw, and could not hold his head, 145
 Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead, —
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
 He died — and they unlocked his chain,
 And scooped for him a shallow grave 150
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.
 I begged them, as a boon, to lay
 His corse in dust whereon the day
 Might shine — it was a foolish thought,
 But then within my brain it wrought, 155
 That even in death his freeborn breast
 In such a dungeon could not rest.
 I might have spared my idle prayer —
 They coldly laughed — and laid him
 there:

The flat and turfless earth above 160
 The being we so much did love;
 His empty chain above it leant,
 Such Murder's fitting monument!

8

But he, the favorite and the flower,
 Most cherished since his natal hour, 165
 His mother's image in fair face,
 The infant love of all his race,
 His martyred father's dearest thought,
 My latest care, for whom I sought
 To hoard my life, that his might be 170
 Less wretched now, and one day free;
 He, too, who yet had held untired
 A spirit natural or inspired —
 He, too, was struck, and day by day
 Was withered on the stalk away. 175
 Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
 To see the human soul take wing
 In any shape, in any mood: —
 I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
 I've seen it on the breaking ocean 180
 Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
 I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
 Of Sin delirious with its dread:
 But these were horrors — this was woe
 Unmixed with such — but sure and slow: 185
 He faded, and so calm and meek,
 So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
 So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
 And grieved for those he left behind;
 With all the while a cheek whose bloom 190
 Was as a mockery of the tomb,
 Whose tints as gently sunk away
 As a departing rainbow's ray;
 An eye of most transparent light,
 That almost made the dungeon bright; 195
 And not a word of murmur — not
 A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
 A little talk of better days,
 A little hope my own to raise,
 For I was sunk in silence — lost 200
 In this last loss, of all the most;
 And then the sighs he would suppress
 Of fainting Nature's feebleness,
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
 I listened, but I could not hear — 205
 I called, for I was wild with fear;
 I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
 Would not be thus admonished;
 I called, and thought I heard a sound —
 I burst my chain with one strong bound, 210
 And rushed to him: — I found him not,
 I only stirred in this black spot,
 I only lived — I only drew
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
 The last — the sole — the dearest link 215
 Between me and the eternal brink,
 Which bound me to my failing race,
 Was broken in this fatal place.
 One on the earth, and one beneath —
 My brothers — both had ceased to breathe!

I took that hand which lay so still, 221
 Alas! my own was full as chill;
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,
 But felt that I was still alive —
 A frantic feeling, when we know 225
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.
 I know not why
 I could not die,
 I had no earthly hope — but faith,
 And that forbade a selfish death. 230

9

What next befell me then and there
 I know not well — I never knew —
 First came the loss of light, and air,
 And then of darkness too:
 I had no thought, no feeling — none — 235
 Among the stones I stood a stone,
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
 As shrubless crags within the mist;
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray;
 It was not night — it was not day, 240
 It was not even the dungeon-light,
 So hateful to my heavy sight,
 But vacancy absorbing space,
 And fixedness — without a place;
 There were no stars — no earth — no time —
 No check — no change — no good — no 246
 crime —
 But silence, and a stirless breath
 Which neither was of life nor death;
 A sea of stagnant idleness,
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless! 250

10

A light broke in upon my brain, —
 It was the carol of a bird;
 It ceased, and then it came again,
 The sweetest song ear ever heard, 255
 And mine was thankful till my eyes
 Ran over with the glad surprise,
 And they that moment could not see
 I was the mate of misery;
 But then by dull degrees came back 260
 My senses to their wonted track;
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor
 Close slowly round me as before,
 I saw the glimmer of the sun
 Creeping as it before had done,
 But through the crevice where it came 265
 That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
 And tamer than upon the tree;
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,
 And song that said a thousand things,
 And seemed to say them all for me! 270
 I never saw its like before,
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
 It seemed like me to want a mate,

But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,

Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For — Heaven forgive that thought! the
while

Which made me both to weep and smile —
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 't was mortal — well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone, —
Lone — as the corse within its shroud,
Lone — as a solitary cloud,

A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

II

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was: — my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

12

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child — no sire — no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,

For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

13

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,

The only one in view;
A small green isle it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.

The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled — and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save, —
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,
Had almost need of such a rest.

14

It might be months, or years, or days —
I kept no count — I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,

I Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island, the only one I could perceive in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view. — Byron.

These heavy walls to me had grown
 A hermitage — and all my own!
 And half I felt as they were come
 To tear me from a second home: 380
 With spiders I had friendship made,
 And watched them in their sullen trade,
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
 And why should I feel less than they?
 We were all inmates of one place, 385
 And I, the monarch of each race,
 Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell!
 In quiet we had learned to dwell —
 My very chains and I grew friends,
 So much a long communion tends 390
 To make us what we are: — even I
 Regained my freedom with a sigh.

June, 1816.

TO THOMAS MOORE

What are you doing now,
 Oh Thomas Moore? ¹
 What are you doing now,
 Oh Thomas Moore?
 Sighing or suing now, 5
 Rhyming or wooing now,
 Billing or cooing now,
 Which, Thomas Moore?

But the Carnival's coming,
 Oh Thomas Moore! 10
 The Carnival's coming,
 Oh Thomas Moore!
 Masking and humming,
 Fifeing and drumming,
 Guitarring and strumming, 15
 Oh Thomas Moore!

December 24, 1816.

SO WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING

So, we'll go no more a roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.
 For the sword outwears its sheath, 5
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.
 Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon, 10
 Yet we'll go no more a-roving
 By the light of the moon.

February 28, 1817.

¹ The Irish poet, 1779-1852, was one of Byron's closest friends, to whom he entrusted his autobiography.

TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,
 And my bark is on the sea;
 But, before I go, Tom Moore,
 Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me, 5
 And a smile to those who hate;
 And, whatever sky's above me,
 Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the Ocean roar around me,
 Yet it still shall bear me on; 10
 Though a desert should surround me,
 It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
 As I gasped upon the brink,
 Ere my fainting spirit fell, 15
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
 That libation I would pour
 Should be — peace with thine and mine,
 And health to thee, Tom Moore. 20

July, 1817.

MAZEPPA

The story of Mazeppa's wild ride, told in a tense but quietly-humorous manner, is a good example of Byron's narrative skill.

I

'Twas after dread Pultowa's ¹ day,
 When fortune left the royal Swede —
 Around a slaughtered army lay,
 No more to combat and to bleed.
 The power and glory of the war, 5
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
 Had passed to the triumphant Czar,
 And Moscow's walls were safe again —
 Until a day more dark and drear,
 And a more memorable year, ² 10
 Should give to slaughter and to shame
 A mightier host and haughtier name;
 A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
 A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

2

Such was the hazard of the die; 15
 The wounded Charles ³ was taught to fly
 By day and night through field and flood,
 Stained with his own and subjects' blood;

¹ The Battle of Pultowa, July 8, 1709, in which the Russians defeated Charles XII of Sweden.

² Reference to Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in the winter of 1812.

³ Previously wounded, Charles XII directed the battle from a stretcher.

For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard to upbraid 20
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When Truth had naught to dread from
Power.

His horse was slain, and Gieta^x gave
His own — and died the Russians' slave.
This, too, sinks after many a league 25
Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests darkling,
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling —

The beacons of surrounding foes —
A King must lay his limbs at length. 30
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In outworn Nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff — his limbs were 35
stark —

The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the Monarch bore his fall, 40
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

3
A band of chiefs! — alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinned it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed; 50
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade —
Himself as rough, and scarce less old, 55
The Ukraine's hetman,² calm and bold;
But first, outspent with his long course,
The Cossack prince rubbed down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,

And smoothed his fetlocks and his mane, 60
And slacked his girth, and stripped his rein,
And joyed to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dew: 65
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
Whate'er was to be done, would do

Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb, 70
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obeyed his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around, — and
Night,

Without a star, pursued her flight, — 75
That steed from sunset until dawn.
His chief would follow like a fawn.

4

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good 80
The long day's march had well withstood —
If still the powder filled the pan,

And flints unloosed kept their lock —
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt; 85
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,

Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the Monarch and his men
The whole or portion offered then 90
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.

And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show, 95
And seem above both wounds and woe; —

And then he said — "Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done 100
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth

So fit a pain had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus¹ and thou:

All Scythia's fame to thine should yield 105
For pricking on o'er flood and field."

Mazeppa answered — "Ill betide
The school wherein I learned to ride!"
Quoth Charles — "Old Hetman, wherefore 110
so,

Since thou hast learned the art so well?" 110
Mazeppa said — "'Twere long to tell;

And we have many a league to go,
With every now and then a blow,
And ten to one at least the foe,

Before our steeds may graze at ease 115
Beyond the swift Borysthenes;²

And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel

Of this your troop." — "But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell 120
This tale of thine, and I may reap,

¹ Colonel Gieta, wounded, gave his own horse to King Charles.

² a viceroy.

¹ The name of Alexander the Great's horse.

² The Dnieper, chief river of the Ukraine.

Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
For at this moment from my eyes
The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track 125
My seventy years of memory back:
I think 'twas in my twentieth spring, —
Ay, 'twas, — when Casimir was king¹ —
John Casimir, — I was his page
Six summers, in my earlier age:
A learned monarch, faith! was he,
And most unlike your Majesty:
He made no wars, and did not gain
New realms to lose them back again;
And (save debates in Warsaw's diet) 135
He reigned in most unseemly quiet;
Not that he had no cares to vex,
He loved the muses and the Sex;
And sometimes these so froward are,
They made him wish himself at war;
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
Another mistress — or new book:
And then he gave prodigious fêtes —
All Warsaw gathered round his gates
To gaze upon his splendid court, 145
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.
He was the Polish Solomon,
So sung his poets, all but one,
Who, being unpensioned, made a satire,
And boasted that he could not flatter. 150
It was a court of jousts and mimes,
Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
Even I for once produced some verses,
And signed my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'
There was a certain Palatine,² 155
A count of far and high descent,
Rich as a salt³ or silver mine;
And he was proud, ye may divine,
As if from Heaven he had been sent;
He had such wealth in blood and ore 160
As few could match beneath the throne;
And he would gaze upon his store,
And o'er his pedigree would pore,
Until by some confusion led,
Which almost looked like want of head, 165
He thought their merits were his own.
His wife was not of his opinion —
His junior she by thirty years —
Grew daily tired of his dominion;
And, after wishes, hopes, and fears, 170
To Virtue a few farewell tears,
A restless dream or two — some glances
At Warsaw's youth — some songs, and
dances,

Awaited but the usual chances,
(Those happy accidents which render 175
The coldest dames so very tender,)
To deck her Count with titles given,
'Tis said, as passports into Heaven;
But, strange to say, they rarely boast
Of these, who have deserved them most. 180

5

"I was a goodly stripling then;
At seventy years I so may say,
That there were few, or boys or men,
Who, in my dawning time of day,
Of vassal or of knight's degree, 185
Could vie in vanities with me;
For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
A port, not like to this ye see,
But as smooth, as all is rugged now;
For Time, and Care, and War, have 190
ploughed
My very soul from out my brow;
And thus I should be disavowed
By all my kind and kin, could they
Compare my day and yesterday.
This change was wrought, too, long ere 195
age
Had ta'en my features for his page:
With years, ye know, have not declined
My strength, my courage, or my mind,
Or at this hour I should not be
Telling old tales beneath a tree, 200
With starless skies my canopy.
But let me on: Theresa's form —
Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
The memory is so quick and warm; 205
And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
Such as our Turkish neighborhood,
Hath mingled with our Polish blood, 210
Dark as above us is the sky;
But through it stole a tender light,
Like the first moonrise of midnight;
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
Which seemed to melt to its own beam; 215
All love, half languor, and half fire,
Like saints that at the stake expire,
And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die.
A brow like a midsummer lake, 220
Transparent with the sun therein,
When waves no murmur dare to make,
And Heaven beholds her face within.
A cheek and lip — but why proceed?
I loved her then — I love her still; 225
And such as I am, love indeed
In fierce extremes — in good and ill.

¹ Casimir V, King of Poland.

² A count who, as chief of a palatinate or province, has certain royal privileges.

³ The reference is natural here, for much of the wealth of Poland was in salt mines.

But still we love even in our rage,
And haunted to our very age
With the vain shadow of the past — 230
As is Mazeppa to the last.

6

"We met — we gazed — I saw, and sighed;
She did not speak, and yet replied;
There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines — 235
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds, 240
Without their will, young hearts and minds;
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.
I saw, and sighed — in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept, 245
Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion — then, even then,

I longed, and was resolved to speak;
But on my lips they died again, 250
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour. — There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is — I have forgot the name — 255
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget:
I reckoned not if I won or lost,
It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see 260
The being whom I loved the most.
I watched her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)

Until I saw, and thus it was,
That she was pensive, nor perceived 265
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
Played on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot. 270
Then through my brain the thought did
pass,
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke
forth,

All incoherent as they were; 276
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listened — 'tis enough —
Who listens once will listen twice;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice — 280
And one refusal no rebuff.

7

"I loved, and was beloved again —
They tell me, Sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain; 285
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am — or rather *was* — a Prince, 290
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost
bleed;

But could not o'er myself evince
The like control. — But to resume:
I loved, and was beloved again; 295
In sooth, it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain. —
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower. 300
My days and nights were nothing — all
Except that hour which doth recall,
In the long lapse from youth to age,
No other like itself — I'd give
The Ukraine back again to live 305
It o'er once more — and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth,
Save nature's gift of Youth and Health. — 310
We met in secret — doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that — I would have given
My life but to have called her mine
In the full view of Earth and Heaven; 315
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

8

"For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us; — the Devil
On such occasions should be civil — 320
The Devil! — I'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long,
But to his pious bile gave vent —
But one fair night, some lurking spies 325
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than wroth —
I was unarmed; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do? — 330
'Twas near his castle, far away
From city or from succor near,
And almost on the break of day;
I did not think to see another,
My moments seemed reduced to few; 335

And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
 And, it may be, a saint or two,
 As I resigned me to my fate,
 They led me to the castle gate:
 Theresa's doom I never knew, 340
 Our lot was henceforth separate. —
 An angry man, ye may opine,
 Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
 And he had reason good to be,
 But he was most enraged lest such 345
 An accident should chance to touch
 Upon his future pedigree;
 Nor less amazed, that such a blot
 His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
 While he was highest of his line; 350
 Because unto himself he seemed
 The first of men, nor less he deemed
 In others' eyes, and most in mine.
 'Sdeath! with a page — perchance a king
 Had reconciled him to the thing; 355
 But with a stripling of a page —
 I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

9

“‘Bring forth the horse!’ — the horse was
 brought!
 In truth, he was a noble steed,
 A Tartar of the Ukraine breed, 360
 Who looked as though the speed of thought
 Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
 Wild as the wild deer, and untought,
 With spur and bridle undefiled —
 'Twas but a day he had been caught; 365
 And snorting, with erected mane,
 And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
 In the full foam of wrath and dread
 To me the desert-born was led:
 They bound me on, that menial throng, 370
 Upon his back with many a thong;
 They loosed him with a sudden lash —
 Away! — away! — and on we dash! —
 Torrents less rapid and less rash.

10

“‘Away! — away! — My breath was gone —
 I saw not where he hurried on: 376
 'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
 And on he foamed — away! — away! —
 The last of human sounds which rose,
 As I was darted from my foes, 380
 Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
 Which on the wind came roaring after
 A moment from that rabble rout:
 With sudden wrath I wrenched my head,
 And snapped the cord, which to the
 mane 385
 Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
 And, writhing half my form about,

Howled back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
 The thunder of my courser's speed,
 Perchance they did not hear nor heed: 390
 It vexes me — for I would fain
 Have paid their insult back again.
 I paid it well in after days:
 There is not of that castle gate,
 Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight, 395
 Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
 Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
 Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
 Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
 And many a time ye there might pass, 400
 Nor dream that e'er that fortress was.
 I saw its turrets in a blaze,
 Their crackling battlements all cleft,
 And the hot lead pour down like rain 404
 From off the scorched and blackening roof,
 Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
 They little thought that day of pain,
 When launched, as on the lightning's flash,
 They bade me to destruction dash,
 That one day I should come again, 410
 With twice five thousand horse, to thank
 The Count for his uncourteous ride.
 They played me then a bitter prank,
 When, with the wild horse for my guide,
 They bound me to his foaming flank: 415
 At length I played them one as frank —
 For Time at last sets all things even —
 And if we do but watch the hour,
 There never yet was human power 420
 Which could evade, if unforgiven,
 The patient search and vigil long
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.

II

“‘Away, away, my steed and I,
 Upon the pinions of the wind!
 All human dwellings left behind, 425
 We sped like meteors through the sky,
 When with its crackling sound the night
 Is chequered with the Northern light.
 Town — village — none were on our track,
 But a wild plain of far extent, 430
 And bounded by a forest black;
 And, save the scarce seen battlement
 On distant heights of some strong hold,
 Against the Tartars built of old,
 No trace of man. The year before 435
 A Turkish army had marched o'er;
 And where the Spahi's¹ hoof hath trod,
 The verdure flies the bloody sod.
 The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
 And a low breeze crept moaning by — 440
 I could have answered with a sigh —
 But fast we fled, away, away! —

¹ Turkish horseman.

And I could neither sigh nor pray;
 And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
 Upon the courser's bristling mane; 445
 But, snorting still with rage and fear,
 He flew upon his far career.
 At times I almost thought, indeed,
 He must have slackened in his speed;
 But no — my bound and slender frame 450
 Was nothing to his angry might,
 And merely like a spur became:
 Each motion which I made to free
 My swoln limbs from their agony
 Increased his fury and affright: 455
 I tried my voice, — 'twas faint and low —
 But yet he swerved as from a blow;
 And, starting to each accent, sprang
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang.
 Meantime my cords were wet with gore, 460
 Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
 And in my tongue the thirst became
 A something fierier far than flame.

12

"We neared the wild wood — 'twas so wide,
 I saw no bounds on either side; 465
 'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
 That bent not to the roughest breeze
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
 And strips the forest in its haste, —
 But these were few and far between, 470
 Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
 Ere strown by those autumnal eves
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,
 Discolored with a lifeless red, 475
 Which stands thereon like stiffened gore
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er;
 And some long winter's night hath shed
 Its frost o'er every tombless head —
 So cold and stark — the raven's beak 480
 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek.
 'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
 And here and there a chestnut stood,
 The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
 But far apart — and well it were, 485
 Or else a different lot were mine —

The boughs gave way, and did not tear
 My limbs; and I found strength to bear
 My wounds, already scarred with cold;
 My bonds forbade to loose my hold. 490
 We rustled through the leaves like wind,
 Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
 By night I heard them on the track,
 Their troop came hard upon our back,
 With their long gallop which can tire 495
 The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
 Where'er we flew they followed on,
 Nor left us with the morning sun;

Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
 At day-break winding through the wood, 500
 And through the night had heard their feet
 Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
 Oh! how I wished for spear or sword,
 At least to die amidst the horde,
 And perish — if it must be so — 505
 At bay, destroying many a foe!
 When first my courser's race begun,
 I wished the goal already won;
 But now I doubted strength and speed.
 Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed 510
 Had nerved him like the mountain-roe —
 Nor faster falls the blinding snow
 Which whelms the peasant near the door
 Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
 Bewildered with the dazzling blast, 515
 Than through the forest-paths he past —
 Untired, untamed, and worse than wild —
 All furious as a favored child
 Balked of its wish; or — fiercer still —
 A woman piqued — who has her will! 520

13

"The wood was past; 'twas more than noon,
 But chill the air, although in June;
 Or it might be my veins ran cold —
 Prolonged endurance tames the bold;
 And I was then not what I seem, 525
 But headlong as a wintry stream,
 And wore my feelings out before
 I well could count their causes o'er.
 And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
 The tortures which beset my path — 530
 Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
 Thus bound in Nature's nakedness,
 (Sprung from a race whose rising blood
 When stirred beyond its calmer mood,
 And trodden hard upon, is like 535
 The rattle-snake's in act to strike,)
 What marvel if this worn-out trunk
 Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
 The earth gave way, the skies rolled round,
 I seemed to sink upon the ground; 540
 But erred — for I was fastly bound.
 My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore,
 And throbbed awhile, then beat no more:
 The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
 I saw the trees like drunkards reel, 545
 And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
 Which saw no farther. He who dies
 Can die no more than then I died,
 O'ertortured by that ghastly ride.
 I felt the blackness come and go, 550
 And strove to wake; but could not make
 My senses climb up from below:
 I felt as on a plank at sea,
 When all the waves that dash o'er thee,

At the same time upheave and whelm, 555
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain; 560
But soon it passed, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such:
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must 565
Feel far more ere we turn to dust!
No matter! I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face — before — and now.

14

"My thoughts came back. Where was I?
Cold,

And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse 570
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb: till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflowed though thick and chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang, 575
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight returned, though dim, alas!
And thickened, as it were, with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
There was a gleam too of the sky, 580
Studded with stars; — it is no dream;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
The bright broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o'er 585
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffened limbs were rebaptized.
My courser's broad breast proudly braves 590
And dashes off the ascending waves,
And onward we advance!

We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear, 595
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew. 600

15

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top: a boundless plain 605
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward — seems,

Like precipices in our dreams,
To stretch beyond the sight;
And here and there a speck of white, 610
Or scattered spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right.
But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste would indicate 615
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like a hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus¹ rose
To make him merry with my woes: 620
That very cheat had cheered me then!
Although detected, welcome still,
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

16

"Onward we went — but slack and slow; 625
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
All feebly foaming went.
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour! 630
But, useless all to me.
His new-born tameness nought availed —
My limbs were bound; my force had failed,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried 635
To rend the bonds so starkly tied —
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolong'd their pain. 640
The dizzy race seemed almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:
Some streaks announced the coming sun —
How slow, alas! he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray 645
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it rolled away —
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And called the radiance from their cars, 650
And filled the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

17

"Up rose the sun; the mists were curled
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around — behind — before. 655
What bootied it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
No sign of travel — none of toil; 660

¹ Phosphorescent light on a marsh; will-o'-the-wisp.

The very air was mute;
 And not an insect's shrill small horn,
 Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
 From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,¹
 Panting as if his heart would burst, 665
 The weary brute still staggered on;
 And still we were — or seemed — alone.
 At length, while reeling on our way,
 Methought I heard a courser neigh
 From out yon tuft of blackening firs. 670
 Is it the wind those branches stirs?
 No, no! From out the forest prance
 A trampling troop; I see them come!
 In one vast squadron they advance!
 I strove to cry — my lips were dumb! 675
 The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
 But where are they the reins to guide?
 A thousand horse — and none to ride!
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,
 Wide nostrils — never stretched by pain, 680
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
 And feet that iron never shod,
 And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
 Like waves that follow o'er the sea, 685
 Came thickly thundering on,
 As if our faint approach to meet!
 The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
 A moment, with a faint low neigh, 690
 He answered, and then fell!
 With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
 And reeking limbs immovable;
 His first and last career is done!
 On came the troop — they saw him stoop, 695
 They saw me strangely bound along
 His back with many a bloody thong.
 They stop — they start — they snuff the
 air,
 Gallop a moment here and there,
 Approach, retire, wheel round and round, 700
 Then plunging back with sudden bound,
 Headed by one black mighty steed,
 Who seemed the patriarch of his breed,
 Without a single speck or hair
 Of white upon his shaggy hide. 705
 They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve
 aside,
 And backward to the forest fly,
 By instinct, from a human eye. —
 They left me there to my despair,
 Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch, 710
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
 Relieved from that unwonted weight,
 From whence I could not extricate
 Nor him nor me — and there we lay,
 The dying on the dead! 715

¹ verst, in Russia 3500 feet.

I little deemed another day
 Would see my houseless, helpless head.
 "And there from morn till twilight bound,
 I felt the heavy hours toil round, 720
 With just enough of life to see
 My last of suns go down on me,
 In hopeless certainty of mind,
 That makes us feel at length resigned
 To that which our foreboding years 725
 Presents the worst and last of fears:
 Inevitable — even a boon,
 Nor more unkind for coming soon;
 Yet shunned and dreaded with such care,
 As if it only were a snare
 That Prudence might escape: 730
 At times both wished for and implored,
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,
 Yet still a dark and hideous close
 To even intolerable woes,
 And welcome in no shape. 735
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
 They who have revelled beyond measure
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
 Die calm, or calmer oft than he
 Whose heritage was Misery: 740
 For he who hath in turn run through
 All that was beautiful and new,
 Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
 And, save the future, (which is viewed
 Not quite as men are base or good, 745
 But as their nerves may be endued,)
 With nought perhaps to grieve: —
 The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
 And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
 Appears, to his distempered eyes, 750
 Arrived to rob him of his prize,
 The tree of his new Paradise.
 To-morrow would have given him all,
 Repaid his pangs, repaired his fall;
 To-morrow would have been the first 755
 Of days no more deplored or curst,
 But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
 Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
 Guerdon of many a painful hour;
 To-morrow would have given him power 760
 To rule — to shine — to smite — to save —
 And must it dawn upon his grave?

18

"The sun was sinking — still I lay
 Chained to the chill and stiffening steed!
 I thought to mingle there our clay; 765
 And my dim eyes of death had need,
 No hope arose of being freed.
 I cast my last looks up the sky,
 And there between me and the sun
 I saw the expecting raven fly, 770

Who scarce would wait till both should die,
 Ere his repast begun.
 He flew, and perched, then flew once more,
 And each time nearer than before;
 I saw his wing through twilight flit, 775
 And once so near me he alit

I could have smote, but lacked the
 strength;

But the slight motion of my hand,
 And feeble scratching of the sand,
 The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
 Which scarcely could be called a voice, 781

Together scared him off at length. —
 I know no more — my latest dream

Is something of a lovely star
 Which fixed my dull eyes from afar, 785

And went and came with wandering beam,
 And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense

Sensation of recurring sense,
 And then subsiding back to death,

And then again a little breath, 790
 A little thrill, a short suspense,

An icy sickness curdling o'er
 My heart, and sparks that crossed my

brain —
 A gasp — a throb — a start of pain,

A sigh — and nothing more. 795

19

"I woke.— Where was I? — Do I see
 A human face look down on me?

And doth a roof above me close?
 Do these limbs on a couch repose?

Is this a chamber where I lie? 800
 And is it mortal, yon bright eye

That watches me with gentle glance?
 I closed my own again once more,

As doubtful that the former trance
 Could not as yet be o'er. 805

A slender girl, long-haired, and tall,
 Sate watching by the cottage wall:

The sparkle of her eye I caught,
 Even with my first return of thought;

For ever and anon she threw 810
 A prying, pitying glance on me

With her black eyes so wild and free.
 I gazed, and gazed, until I knew

No vision it could be, —
 But that I lived, and was released

From adding to the vulture's feast.
 And when the Cossack maid beheld

My heavy eyes at length unsealed,
 She smiled — and I essayed to speak,

But failed — and she approached, and 820
 made

With lip and finger signs that said,
 I must not strive as yet to break

The silence, till my strength should be

Enough to leave my accents free;
 And then her hand on mine she laid, 825

And smoothed the pillow for my head,
 And stole along on tiptoe tread,

And gently oped the door, and spake
 In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet!

Even music followed her light feet; — 830
 But those she called were not awake,

And she went forth; but, ere she passed,
 Another look on me she cast,

Another sign she made, to say,
 That I had naught to fear, that all 835

Were near, at my command or call,
 And she would not delay

Her due return: — while she was gone,
 Methought I felt too much alone.

20

"She came with mother and with sire — 840
 What need of more? — I will not tire

With long recital of the rest,
 Since I became the Cossack's guest.

They found me senseless on the plain —
 They bore me to the nearest hut — 845

They brought me into life again —
 Me — one day o'er their realm to reign!

Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
 His rage, refining on my pain,

Sent me forth to the wilderness, 850
 Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,

To pass the desert to a throne, —
 What mortal his own doom may guess? —

Let none despond, let none despair!
 To-morrow the Borysthenes 855

May see our coursers graze at ease
 Upon his Turkish bank, — and never

Had I such welcome for a river
 As I shall yield when safely there.

Comrades, good night!" — The Hetman 860
 threw

His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
 With leafy couch already made,

A bed nor comfortless nor new
 To him who took his rest whene'er

The hour arrived, no matter where: 865
 His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.

And if ye marvel Charles forgot
 To thank his tale, *he* wondered not, —

The king had been an hour asleep.

DON JUAN

Don Juan is Byron's great humorous poem. He completed sixteen cantos, and had started a seventeenth, before his death. In letters to his publisher, Murray, he called it "a playful satire, with as little poetry as could be helped," and "a satire on abuses of the present states of society, and not an eulogy of vice."

CANTO THE THIRD, STANZAS 85-END

85

Thus, usually, when *he* was asked to sing,
He gave the different nations something
national;

'Twas all the same to him — "God save the
king,"

Or "*Ca ira*," according to the fashion all:
His muse made increment of any thing,

From the high lyric down to the low
rational:

If Pindar¹ sang horse-races, what should
hinder

Himself from being as pliable as Pindar? 680

86

In France, for instance, he would write a
chanson;

In England a six canto quarto tale;

In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on
The last war — much the same in Por-
tugal;

In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on 685
Would be old Goethe's (see what says De
Staël);²

In Italy he'd ape the "Trecentisti";³

In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like
this t' ye:

I

The Isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece!

Where burning Sappho⁴ loved and sung, 690

Where grew the arts of war and peace,

Where Delos⁵ rose, and Phœbus sprung!

Eternal summer gilds them yet,

But all, except their sun, is set.

2.

The Scian⁶ and the Teian⁷ muse, 695

The hero's harp, the lover's lute,

Have found the fame your shores refuse;

Their place of birth alone is mute

To sounds which echo further west

Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."⁸ 700

3

The mountains look on Marathon —⁹

And Marathon looks on the sea;

And musing there an hour alone,

I dreamed that Greece might still be free;

¹ Most of his odes, while religious in character, were written to celebrate victories in the Greek games.

² Madame de Staël, 1766-1817, author of *De l'Allemagne*.

³ Fourteenth-century Italian artists.

⁴ The great Greek poetess of love, who wrote about 610 B.C.

⁵ The island of Delos, the birthplace of Phœbus Apollo, was supposed to have risen in the Ægean Sea.

⁶ Homer, because the island of Scio was said to be his birthplace.

⁷ Anacreon, born in Teos in Asia Minor.

⁸ The *Μακάριον νήσοι* of the Greek poets were supposed to have been the Cape de Verd Islands, or the Canaries. — Byron.

⁹ Where the Greeks defeated the Persians, 490 B.C.

For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave. 705

4

A king¹ sate on the rocky brow

Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;²

And ships, by thousands, lay below,

And men in nations; — all were his! 710

He counted them at break of day —

And when the sun set where were they?

5

And where are they? and where art thou,

My country? On thy voiceless shore

The heroic lay is tuneless now — 715

The heroic bosom beats no more!

And must thy lyre, so long divine,

Degenerate into hands like mine?

6

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,

Though linked among a fettered race, 720

To feel at least a patriot's shame,

Even as I sing, suffuse my face;

For what is left the poet here?

For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

7

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest? 725

Must *we* but blush? — Our fathers bled.

Earth! render back from out thy breast

A remnant of our Spartan dead!

Of the three hundred grant but three,

To make a new Thermopylæ!³ 730

8

What, silent still? and silent all?

Ah! no; — the voices of the dead

Sound like a distant torrent's fall,

And answer, "Let one living head,

But one arise, — we come, we come!" 735

'Tis but the living who are dumb.

9

In vain — in vain: strike other chords;

Fill high the cup with Samian⁴ wine!

Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,

And shed the blood of Scio's vine! 740

Hark! rising to the ignoble call —

How answers each bold Bacchanal!

IO

You have the Pyrrhic dance⁵ as yet,

Where is the Pyrrhic⁶ phalanx gone?

Of two such lessons, why forget 745

The nobler and the manlier one?

You have the letters Cadmus⁷ gave —

Think ye he meant them for a slave?

¹ Xerxes, King of Persia.

² The island near which the Greek navy defeated Xerxes, 480 B.C.

³ The pass which Leonidas and his small band of Spartans defended heroically, but in vain, against Xerxes in 480 B.C.

⁴ From the island of Samos.

⁵ A war dance.

⁶ King Pyrrhus of Epirus, third century B.C., evolved the phalanx.

⁷ The supposed inventor of the alphabet.

11

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 We will not think of themes like these! 750
 It made Anacreon's ¹ song divine:
 He served — but served Polycrates —
 A tyrant; but our masters then
 Were still, at least, our countrymen.

12

The tyrant of the Chersonese ² 755
 Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades! ³
 Oh! that the present hour would lend
 Another despot of the kind!
 Such chains as his were sure to bind. 760

13

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore, ⁴
 Exists the remnant of a line
 Such as the Doric ⁵ mothers bore;
 And there, perhaps, some seed is sown, 765
 The Heracleidan blood ⁶ might own.

14

Trust not for freedom to the Franks —
 They have a king who buys and sells:
 In native swords, and native ranks,
 The only hope of courage dwells; 770
 But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
 Would break your shield, however broad.

15

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 Our virgins dance beneath the shade —
 I see their glorious black eyes shine; 775
 But gazing on each glowing maid,
 My own the burning tear-drop laves,
 To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

16

Place me on Sunium's ⁷ marbled steep,
 Where nothing, save the waves and I, 780
 May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
 There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —
 Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

87

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should have
 sung, 785
 The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;
 If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was
 young,
 Yet in these times he might have done
 much worse:

¹ Anacreon lived in Samos for a time as court poet to the tyrant Polycrates, his patron.

² The peninsula of Gallipoli.

³ Who commanded the Greeks at Marathon.

⁴ In Albania. ⁵ Spartan.

⁶ The blood of Heracles or Hercules.

⁷ Southernmost point of Attica, site of an old temple to Athena which faces the sea.

His strain displayed some feeling — right or
 wrong;
 And feeling, in a poet, is the source 790
 Of others' feeling; but they are such liars,
 And take all colors — like the hands of dyers.

88

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
 Falling like dew, upon a thought, produces
 That which makes thousands, perhaps mil-
 lions, think; 795
 'Tis strange, the shortest letter which man
 uses
 Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
 Of ages; to what straits old Time reduces
 Frail man, when paper — even a rag like
 this,
 Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's
 his. 800

89

And when his bones are dust, his grave a
 blank,
 His station, generation, even his nation,
 Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank
 In chronological commemoration, 805
 Some dull MS. Oblivion long has sank,
 Or graven stone found in a barrack's sta-
 tion
 In digging the foundation of a closet,
 May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

90

And Glory long has made the sages smile;
 'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion,
 wind — 810
 Depending more upon the historian's style
 Than on the name a person leaves behind:
 Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to
 Hoyle:
 The present century was growing blind
 To the great Marlborough's ¹ skill in giving
 knocks, 815
 Until his late Life by Archdeacon Cox.

91

Milton's the Prince of Poets — so we say;
 A little heavy, but no less divine:
 An independent being in his day —
 Learned, pious, temperate in love and
 wine; 820
 But, his life falling into Johnson's way,
 We're told this great High Priest of all the
 Nine
 Was whipt at college — a harsh sire — odd
 spouse,
 For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

¹ The victor at Blenheim, 1704.

92

All these are, *certes*, entertaining facts, ⁸²⁵
 Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord
 Bacon's bribes;
 Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts;
 Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well de-
 scribes);
 Like Cromwell's pranks; — but although
 Truth exacts
 These amiable descriptions from the
 scribes, ⁸³⁰
 As most essential to their hero's story,
 They do not much contribute to his glory.

93

All are not moralists, like Southey, when
 He prated to the world of "Pantiso-
 cracy," ¹
 Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who,
 then ⁸³⁵
 Seasoned his pedlar poems with Demo-
 cracy;
 Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
 Let to the *Morning Post* its aristocracy;
 When he and Southey, following the same
 path,
 Espoused two partners ² (milliners of
 Bath). ⁸⁴⁰

94

Such names at present cut a convict figure,
 The very Botany Bay ³ in moral geo-
 graphy;
 Their loyal treason, renegado rigor,
 Are good manure for their more bare bio-
 graphy.
 Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is
 bigger ⁸⁴⁵
 Than any since the birthday of typo-
 graphy;
 A drowsy frowzy poem, called the "*Excursion*,"
 Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

95

He there builds up a formidable dyke
 Between his own and others' intellect; ⁸⁵⁰
 But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers,
 like
 Joanna Southcote's ⁴ Shiloh, and her sect,
 Are things which in this century don't strike
 The public mind, — so few are the elect;

¹ The reference is to the ideal commonwealth that Coleridge and Southey planned to establish.

² Edith and Sarah Fricker.

³ The English convict colony in New South Wales, Australia.

⁴ She predicted the birth to her in 1814 of a new Messiah.

And the new births of both their stale vir-
 ginities ⁸⁵⁵
 Have proved but dropsies, ¹ taken for divin-
 ities.

96

But let me to my story: I must own,
 If I have any fault, it is digression —
 Leaving my people to proceed alone,
 While I soliloquize beyond expression; ⁸⁶⁰
 But these are my addresses from the throne,
 Which put off business to the ensuing
 session:

Forgetting each omission is a loss to
 The world, not quite so great as Ariosto. ²

97

I know that what our neighbors call "*lon-
 gueurs*," ³ ⁸⁶⁵
 (We've not so good a *word*, but have the
thing,

In that complete perfection which insures
 An epic from Bob Southey every spring),
 Form not the true temptation which allures
 The reader; but 'twould not be hard to
 bring ⁸⁷⁰
 Some fine examples of the *épopée*, ⁴
 To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

98

We learn from Horace, ⁵ "Homer sometimes
 sleeps;"

We feel without him, — Wordsworth some-
 times wakes, —

To show with what complacency he creeps,
 With his dear "*Waggoners*," around his
 lakes. ⁸⁷⁶

He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps —
 Of Ocean? — No, of air; and then he makes
 Another outcry for "a little boat,"
 And drivels seas to set it well afloat. ⁸⁸⁰

99

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,
 And Pegasus runs restive in his "*Waggon*,"
 Could he not beg the loan of Charles's
 Wain? ⁶

Or pray Medea ⁷ for a single dragon?
 Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain, ⁸⁸⁵
 He feared his neck to venture such a nag
 on,

¹ Miss Southcote died of dropsy, instead of giving birth to a child.

² Great romantic poet of Italy, 1474-1533, who wrote *Orlando Furioso*.

³ tediousness.

⁴ epic.

⁵ In his *Ars Poetica*.

⁶ wagon; here, the group of stars called "the dipper."

⁷ After she was forsaken by Jason, Medea killed her children, set fire to the house, and escaped in a dragon-drawn chariot.

And he must needs mount nearer to the
moon,
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

100

"Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Waggons!"
Oh! ye shades

Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to
this? 890

That trash of such sort not alone evades
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack
Cades

Of sense and song above your graves may
hiss —

The "little" boatman" and his "Peter
Bell"

Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel"! 895

101

T' our tale. — The feast was over, the slaves
gone,

The dwarfs and dancing girls had all re-
tired;

The Arab lore and Poet's song were done,
And every sound of revelry expired; 900

The lady and her lover, left alone,
The rosy flood of Twilight's sky admired; —

Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest
thee!

102

Ave Maria! blessèd be the hour! 905
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so
oft

Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,

While swung the deep bell in the distant
tower,

Or the faint dying day-hymn stole
aloft, 910

And not a breath crept through the rosy
air,

And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with
prayer.

103

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer!

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of Love!

Ave Maria! may our spirits dare 915
Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!

Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!
Those downcast eyes beneath the Al-

mighty Dove —

What though 'tis but a pictured image? —
strike —

That painting is no idol, — 'tis too like. 920

104

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,
In nameless print — that I have no devo-
tion;

But set those persons down with me to pray,
And you shall see who has the properest
notion

Of getting into Heaven the shortest way; 925
My altars are the mountains and the

Ocean,

Earth, air, stars, — all that springs from the
great Whole,

Who hath produced, and will receive the
Soul.

105

Sweet Hour of Twilight! — in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore 930

Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave

flowed o'er,

To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore

And Dryden's lay ¹ made haunted ground to
me, 935

How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

106

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless
song,

Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and
mine,

And Vesper bell's that rose the boughs
along; 940

The spectre huntsman ² of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair

throng

Which learned from this example not to fly
From a true lover, — shadowed my mind's

eye.

107

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good
things — 945

Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
To the young bird the parent's brooding

wings,

The welcome stall to the o'erlabored
steer; ³

Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone
clings,

Whate'er our household gods protect of
dear, 950

¹ Dryden's poem, *Theodore and Honoria*, which is based on a story in Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

² This ghost, in Boccaccio's story, haunts the girl who spurned his love when he was alive.

³ These four lines are a paraphrase from Sappho.

Are gathered round us by thy look of rest;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's
breast.

108

Soft Hour! which wakes the wish and melts
the heart

Of those who sail the seas, on the first
day

When they from their sweet friends are torn
apart; 955

Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
As the far bell of Vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;

Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
Ah! surely Nothing dies but Something
mourns! 960

109

When Nero perished by the justest doom

Which ever the Destroyer yet destroyed,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,

Of nations freed, and the world overjoyed,
Some hands unseen strewed flowers upon his
tomb: 965

Perhaps the weakness of a heart not
void

Of feeling for some kindness done, when
Power

Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

110

But I'm digressing; what on earth has
Nero,

Or any such like sovereign buffoons, 970
To do with the transactions of my hero,

More than such madmen's fellow man —
the moon's?

Sure my invention must be down at zero,
And I grown one of many "wooden
spoons"

Of verse (the name with which we Cantabs¹
please 975

To dub the last of honors in degrees).

111

I feel this tediousness will never do —

'Tis being *too* epic, and I must cut down
(In copying) this long canto into two;

They'll never find it out, unless I own 980
The fact, excepting some experienced few;

And then as an improvement 'twill be
shown:

I'll prove that such the opinion of the critic is
From Aristotle *passim*. — See ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗΣ.²

October–November, 1819.

STANZAS

WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE
AND PISA

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our Youth are the days of our
glory;

And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-
twenty

Are worth all your laurels, though ever so
plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow
that is wrinkled? 5

'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew
besprinkled.

Then away with all such from the head that
is hoary!

What care I for the wreaths that can *only*
give glory?

Oh FAME! — if I e'er took delight in thy
praises,

'T was less for the sake of thy high sounding
phrases, 10

Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one
discover,

She thought that I was not unworthy to love
her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found
thee;

Her Glance was the best of the rays that sur-
round thee;

When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright
in my story, 15

I knew it was Love, and I felt it was Glory.

November, 1821.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

MISSOLONGHI, JANUARY 22, 1824

Byron's last poem, written three months be-
fore his death.

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,

Since others it hath ceased to move:

Yet, though I cannot be beloved,

Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf; 5

The flowers and fruits of Love are gone;

The worm, the canker, and the grief

Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys

Is lone as some volcanic isle; 10

¹ Cambridge men.

² *Poetics*, Aristotle's great discussion of literature.

No torch is kindled at its blaze — A funeral pile.		Awake! (not Greece — she <i>is</i> awake!) Awake, my spirit! Think through <i>whom</i> Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake, And then strike home!	25
The hope, the fear, the jealous care, The exalted portion of the pain And power of love, I cannot share, But wear the chain.	15	Tread those reviving passions down, Unworthy manhood! — unto thee Indifferent should the smile or frown Of Beauty be.	30
But 'tis not <i>thus</i> — and 'tis not <i>here</i> — Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor <i>now</i> , Where glory decks the hero's bier, Or binds his brow.	30	If thou regret'st thy youth, <i>why live?</i> The land of honorable death Is here: — up to the field, and give Away thy breath!	35
The sword, the banner, and the field, Glory and Greece, around me see! The Spartan, borne upon his shield, Was not more free.		Seek out — less often sought than found — A soldier's grave, for thee the best; Then look around, and choose thy ground, And take thy rest.	40

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822)

Shelley, the eldest son of Timothy Shelley, a well-to-do country squire who later became a baronet (a title to which the poet could have been heir), was born at Field Place, near Horsham in Sussex, August 4, 1792. After six years at Eton, he entered University College, Oxford, in 1810. He was expelled in the following year for admitting and defending his authorship of a pamphlet, *The Necessity of Atheism*, published anonymously by a local bookseller. Sir Timothy was much displeased with his son's radicalism, and his displeasure increased when Shelley, in August of the same year, eloped with Harriet Westbrook, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a retired innkeeper. Nevertheless he continued his son's small allowance, which enabled the Shelleys to live in lodgings in various cities of the British Isles. During these years Shelley wrote sporadically, read much among the writings of social radicals, and urged the necessity of freedom upon everybody that he met. His only published poem was *Queen Mab*, in 1813. In 1814 he became acquainted with William Godwin, the author of the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. He fell in love with his daughter Mary, whose mother was Mary Wollstonecraft, author of the *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, and went with her to France. Two years later, when Harriet Westbrook Shelley drowned herself in the Serpentine in London, the poet married Mary Godwin. In 1817 the Court of Chancery refused Shelley the possession of his two children by Harriet; and in 1818 he left England, never to return.

During the previous four years Shelley had lived most of the time on the continent and had published *Alastor* in 1816 and *The Revolt of Islam* in 1817. He now went direct to Italy, living the last years of his life at Naples, Venice, Rome, and finally Pisa. Mary was his constant companion. He spent much time, too, with friends like Leigh Hunt and especially Byron, with whom he had traveled in Switzerland during the summer of 1816 and whom he saw much of in Venice. During these years Shelley produced and published, in succession, *The Cenci*, the greatest poetic tragedy since Shakespeare, *Prometheus Unbound*, *Epipsychidion*, *Adonais*, *Hellas*, and many short lyrics.

On July 8, 1823, Shelley and a friend, Mr. Williams, were caught in a squall while sailing a small boat in the Gulf of Lerici. Days later, Shelley's body was washed ashore. It was cremated, according to law, on the beach, in the presence of Trelawney, Leigh Hunt, and Byron. His ashes were taken to Rome and buried in the Protestant cemetery, near the grave of Keats.

To characterize Shelley in a few lines is difficult. A few hints, however, may be helpful to the student approaching him for the first time. To many critics, Shelley, like Spenser, is a "poet's poet," who can be appreciated best by those with a gift, or at least a love, for poetry. He is not a "popular" poet in the sense that Scott and Byron are. Unlike them, he cares less for the story than for the ideas and emotion behind the story; and often this thought and feeling are not so much expressed in concrete form as suggested. He gives us "the still, sad music of humanity," which must be felt before it is comprehended. His world is not the everyday world of Wordsworth, but it is none the less true, even though to the realistically minded it seems a strange ethereal world of clouds and winds and light and rapid motion. Less often than Keats and Coleridge, who also give us dream worlds, does he create the illusion of reality. According to Shelley (see his *Defence of*

Poetry), poetry is imagination, and imagination, to him, is the perception of the *value* of facts and ideas, both separately and as a whole, which logic and reason have produced.

Shelley believed in human nature, its essential goodness and its perfectibility. He looked forward to the brotherhood of man in a world of freedom, beauty, and love. In his own life he was impracticable, misunderstood, and often condemned. But he was, said Byron, "the best and least selfish man I ever knew. I never knew one who was not a beast in comparison."

Good one-volume editions of Shelley's poetry are the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company) and the Globe (Macmillan). The completest studies are by E. Dowden (Lippincott) and, most recently, W. E. Peck (Houghton Mifflin Company). J. A. Symonds has written his biography for the English Men of Letters Series. A. Maurois' *Ariel* gives a vivid idea of the man, but says little of the poet. Among the numerous essays on Shelley may be mentioned those by Arnold, Browning, Leigh Hunt, and Francis Thompson.

HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

The theme of the poem, according to Mrs. Shelley, came to the poet during a trip on Lake Geneva with Byron. Shelley's idea of beauty is Platonic. A beautiful object does not give us true or complete beauty. It can only suggest the flawless, immaterial beauty behind it. In other words, it is not the thing, but the idea of the thing, that matters.

I

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats though unseen among us, visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to
flower;
Like moonbeams that behind some piny
mountain shower, 5
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,
Like memory of music fled, 10
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

2

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine
upon
Of human thought or form, where art
thou gone? 15
Why dost thou pass away, and leave our
state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and deso-
late?
Ask why the sunlight not forever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain
river;
Why aught should fail and fade that once is
shown; 20
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom; why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope.

3

No voice from some sublimer world hath
ever 25
To sage or poet these responses given;
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost,
and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavor,
Frail spells, whose uttered charm might not
avail to sever,
From all we hear and all we see, 30
Doubt, chance, and mutability.
Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains
driven,
Or music by the night wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream, 35
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

4

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds,
depart
And come, for some uncertain moments
lent.
Man were immortal and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou
art, 40
Keep with thy glorious train firm state
within his heart.
Thou messenger of sympathies
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes!
Thou, that to human thought art nourish-
ment,
Like darkness to a dying flame, 45
Depart not as thy shadow came,
Depart not, lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality!

5

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave
and ruin, 50
And starlight wood, with fearful steps
pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead;
I called on poisonous names with which our
youth is fed.

I was not heard — I saw them not —
 When, musing deeply on the lot 55
 Of life, at that sweet time when winds are
 wooning
 All vital things that wake to bring
 News of birds and blossoming, —
 Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
 I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ec-
 stasy! — 60

6

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
 To thee and thine — have I not kept the
 vow?
 With beating heart and streaming eyes,
 even now
 I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
 Each from his voiceless grave: they have in
 visioned bowers 65
 Of studious zeal or love's delight
 Outwatched with me the envious
 night —
 They know that never joy illumed my brow
 Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst
 free
 This world from its dark slavery, 70
 That thou, O awful LOVELINESS,
 Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot
 express.

7

The day becomes more solemn and serene
 When noon is past; there is a harmony
 In autumn, and a luster in its sky, 75
 Which through the summer is not heard or
 seen,
 As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
 Thus let thy power, which like the truth
 Of nature on my passive youth
 Descended, to my onward life supply 80
 Its calm, — to one who worships thee,
 And every form containing thee,
 Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind
 To fear himself, and love all humankind.

1816.

OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveler from an antique land
 Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of
 stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them, on the
 sand,
 Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose
 frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold com-
 mand, 5
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless
 things,
 The hand¹ that mocked them, and the heart
 that fed: 2
 And on the pedestal these words appear:
 'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings: 10
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away."

1817.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN
DEJECTION NEAR
NAPLES

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
 The waves are dancing fast and bright,
 Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
 The purple noon's transparent might;
 The breath of the moist earth is light 5
 Around its unexpanded buds;
 Like many a voice of one delight,
 The winds', the birds', the ocean-floods',
 The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor 10
 With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
 I see the waves upon the shore
 Like light dissolved in star-showers
 thrown;
 I sit upon the sands alone —
 The lightning of the noon-tide ocean 15
 Is flashing round me, and a tone
 Arises from its measured motion,
 How sweet! did any heart now share in my
 emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
 Nor peace within nor calm around, 20
 Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
 The sage in meditation found,
 And walked with inward glory crowned —
 Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
 Others I see whom these surround — 25
 Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
 To me that cup has been dealt in another
 measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
 Even as the winds and waters are;
 I could lie down like a tired child, 30
 And weep away the life of care
 Which I have borne, and yet must
 bear.

¹ The sculptor's.² The king's heart, which nursed those passions.

Till death like sleep might steal on me,
 And I might feel in the warm air
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea 35
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monot-
 ony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
 As I, when this sweet day is gone,
 Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
 Insults with this untimely moan; 40
 They might lament — for I am one
 Whom men love not, — and yet regret,
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun
 Shall on its stainless glory set,
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in
 memory yet. 45

1819.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

"This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions. The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it." Shelley.

The poem is remarkable for the boldness of its imagery, which is supported not so much by thought as by the intense emotion and exquisite music of the poem.

Note that Shelley uses the *terza rima* of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, with a couplet after each group of four strophes, thus: *aba bcb cdc ded ee*. The result is a stanza which looks like the sonnet-form, but is different in effect.

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's
 being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves
 dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter
 fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou 5
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and
 low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until

Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
 Destroyer and Preserver; hear, oh hear!

2

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's
 commotion, 15
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are
 shed,
 Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and
 ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
 On the blue surface of thine airy surge, 19
 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad,¹ even from the dim
 verge
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
 The locks of the approaching storm. Thou
 dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre, 25
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
 Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh
 hear!

3

Thou who didst waken from his summer-
 dreams
 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay, 30
 Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice² isle in Baiae's³ bay,
 And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
 Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers 35
 So sweet, the sense faints picturing them!
 Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far
 below

The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which
 wear

The sapless foliage of the ocean know 40

¹ Bacchante, frenzied attendant of Bacchus.

² soft volcanic lava.

³ A seaside town not far from Naples.

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh
hear!

4

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and
share 45

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyeey speed 50
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have
striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and
bowed 55
One too like thee — tameless, and swift, and
proud.

5

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone, 60
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit
fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new
birth!

And, by the incantation of this verse, 65

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among man-
kind!

Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? 70

1819.

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I arise from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright:

I arise from dreams of thee, 5
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me — who knows how?
To thy chamber-window, Sweet!

The wandering airs, they faint
On the dark, the silent stream —
The champak¹ odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine, 15
O beloved as thou art!

Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale. 20
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last.

1819.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

END OF THE LAST ACT

Prometheus Unbound is Shelley's lyric drama
on the defiant Titan who stole fire from the
gods for man.

DEMOGORGON

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmonies,
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll
The love which paves thy path along the
skies:

THE EARTH

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies. 5

DEMOGORGON

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly
Earth

With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the swift
birth

Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, harmony:

THE MOON

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee. 10

DEMOGORGON

Ye Kings of suns and stars, Dæmons and
Gods,

Ethereal Dominations, who possess

1 Hindu for a kind of magnolia tree.

Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness:

A VOICE FROM ABOVE

Our great Republic hears: we are blest, and
bless. 15

DEMOGORGON

Ye happy Dead, whom beams of brightest
verse

Are clouds to hide, not colors to portray,
Whether your nature is that universe
Which once ye saw and suffered —

A VOICE FROM BENEATH

Or, as they 20
Whom we have left, we change and pass
away.

DEMOGORGON

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the central
stone
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted
domes
To the dull weed some sea-worm battens
on: 25

A CONFUSED VOICE

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

DEMOGORGON

Spirits, whose homes are flesh; ye beasts and
birds,
Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves and
buds;
Lightning and wind; and ye untamable herds,
Meteors and mists, which throng air's
solitudes: 30

A VOICE

Thy voice to us is wind among still woods.

DEMOGORGON

Man who wert once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this immortal
day: 35

ALL

Speak: thy strong words may never pass
away.

DEMOGORGON

This is the day which down the void abysm
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's
despotism,

And Conquest is dragged captive through
the deep;
Love, from its awful throne of patient
power 40

In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dread endurance, from the slippery,
steep,

And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endur-
ance — 45

These are the seals of that most firm assur-
ance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's
strength;

And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts, and hours, should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his
length; 50

These are the spells by which to reassume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or
night;

To defy Power, which seems omnipo-
tent; 55

To love, and bear; to hope till Hope create:
From its own wreck the thing it contem-
plates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free; 60
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

1818-19.

THE CLOUD

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;

I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.

From my wings are shaken the dews that
waken 5

The sweet buds every one,

When rocked to rest on their mother's
breast,

As she dances about the sun.

I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under, 10

And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white, 15
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.

Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
 Lightning my pilot sits;
 In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
 It struggles and howls at fits; 20
 Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
 This pilot is guiding me,
 Lured by the love of the genii that move
 In the depths of the purple sea;
 Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills, 25
 Over the lakes and the plains,
 Wherever he dream, under mountain or
 stream,
 The Spirit he loves remains;
 And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue
 smile,
 Whilst he is dissolving in rains. 30

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
 And his burning plumes outspread,
 Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
 When the morning star shines dead;
 As on the jag of a mountain crag, 35
 Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
 An eagle alit one moment may sit
 In the light of its golden wings.
 And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit
 sea beneath,
 Its ardors of rest and of love, 40
 And the crimson pall of eve may fall
 From the depth of Heaven above,
 With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
 As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden, 45
 Whom mortals call the Moon,
 Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
 By the midnight breezes strewn;
 And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
 Which only the angels hear, 50
 May have broken the woof of my tent's thin
 roof,
 The stars peep behind her and peer;
 And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
 Like a swarm of golden bees,
 When I widen the rent in my wind-built
 tent, 55
 Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
 Like strips of the sky fallen through me on
 high,
 Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
 And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl; 60
 The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and
 swim
 When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
 From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
 Over a torrent sea,

Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof, — 65
 The mountains its columns be.
 The triumphal arch, through which I march,
 With hurricane, fire, and snow,
 When the Powers of the air are chained to
 my chair,
 Is the million-colored bow; 70
 The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
 While the moist Earth was laughing be-
 low.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
 And the nursling of the Sky;
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and
 shores, 75
 I change, but I cannot die.
 For after the rain when with never a stain
 The pavilion of Heaven is bare,
 And the winds and sunbeams with their
 convex gleams
 Build up the blue dome of air, 80
 I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,¹
 And out of the caverns of rain,
 Like a child from the womb, like a ghost
 from the tomb,
 I arise and unbuild it again.
 1820.

TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
 Bird thou never wert,
 That from Heaven, or near it,
 Pourest thy full heart
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art. 5
 Higher still and higher
 From the earth thou springest
 Like a cloud of fire;
 The blue deep thou wingest,
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever
 singest. 10

In the golden lightning
 Of the sunken sun,
 O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
 Thou dost float and run;
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is just
 begun. 15

The pale purple even
 Melts around thy flight;
 Like a star of Heaven,
 In the broad daylight
 Thou art unseen, — but yet I hear thy shrill
 delight, 20

¹ Monument to the dead, especially where the body is
 lost or is buried elsewhere.

Keen as are the arrows
 Of that silver sphere,
 Whose intense lamp narrows
 In the white dawn clear
 Until we hardly see — we feel that it is
 there; 25

All the earth and air
 With thy voice is loud,
 As, when night is bare,
 From one lonely cloud
 The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven
 is overflowed. 30

What thou art we know not;
 What is most like thee?
 From rainbow clouds there flow not
 Drops so bright to see
 As from thy presence showers a rain of
 melody. 35

Like a Poet hidden
 In the light of thought,
 Singing hymns unbidden,
 Till the world is wrought
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded
 not: 40

Like a high-born maiden
 In a palace-tower,
 Soothing her love-laden
 Soul in secret hour
 With music sweet as love, — which overflows
 her bower: 45

Like a glowworm golden
 In a dell of dew,
 Scattering unhehden
 Its ærial hue
 Among the flowers and grass which screen
 it from the view: 50

Like a rose embowered
 In its own green leaves,
 By warm winds deflowered,
 Till the scent it gives
 Makes faint with too much sweet those
 heavy winged thieves. 55

Sound of vernal showers
 On the twinkling grass,
 Rain-awakened flowers,
 All that ever was
 Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth
 surpass. 60

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
 What sweet thoughts are thine;

I have never heard
 Praise of love or wine
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so di-
 vine. 65

Chorus Hymeneal,
 Or triumphal chant,
 Matched with thine, would be all
 But an empty vaunt,
 A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden
 want. 70

What objects are the fountains
 Of thy happy strain?
 What fields or waves or mountains?
 What shapes of sky or plain?
 What love of thine own kind? what ignorance
 of pain? 75

With thy clear keen joyance
 Languor cannot be;
 Shadow of annoyance
 Never came near thee;
 Thou lovest — but ne'er knew love's sad
 satiety. 80

Waking or asleep,
 Thou of death must deem
 Things more true and deep
 Than we mortals dream —
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal
 stream? 85

We look before and after,
 And pine for what is not;
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught;
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of
 saddest thought. 90

Yet if we could scorn
 Hate, and pride, and fear;
 If we were things born
 Not to shed a tear,
 I know not how thy joy we ever should come
 near. 95

Better than all measures
 Of delightful sound,
 Better than all treasures
 That in books are found,
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the
 ground! 100

Teach me half the gladness
 That thy brain must know,

Such harmonious madness
 From my lips would flow
 The world should listen then — as I am
 listening now. 105
 1820.

TO NIGHT

I

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
 Spirit of Night!
 Out of the misty eastern cave,
 Where all the long and lone daylight
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear, 5
 Which make thee terrible and dear, —
 Swift be thy flight!

2

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
 Star-inwrought!
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day; 10
 Kiss her until she be wearied out;
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
 Touching all with thine opiate wand —
 Come, long-sought!

3

When I arose and saw the dawn, 15
 I sighed for thee;
 When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
 And moon lay heavy on flower and tree,
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,
 Lingering like an unloved guest, 20
 I sighed for thee.

4

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
 Wouldst thou me?
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
 Murmured like a noontide bee, 25
 Shall I nestle near thy side?
 Wouldst thou me? — and I replied,
 No, not thee!

5

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon; 30
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;
 Of neither would I ask the boon
 I ask of thee, beloved Night, —
 Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon! 35

1821.

TIME

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years,
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe

Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb
 and flow

Claspest the limits of mortality, 5
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable
 shore;

Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
 Who shall put forth on thee,
 Unfathomable Sea? 10

1821.

MUTABILITY

I

The flower that smiles to-day
 To-morrow dies;
 All that we wish to stay,
 Tempts and then flies.
 What is this world's delight? 5
 Lightning that mocks the night,
 Brief even as bright.

2

Virtue, how frail it is!
 Friendship, how rare!
 Love, how it sells poor bliss 10
 For proud despair!
 But we, though soon they fall,
 Survive their joy and all
 Which ours we call.

3

Whilst skies are blue and bright, 15
 Whilst flowers are gay,
 Whilst eyes that change ere night
 Make glad the day;
 Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
 Dream thou — and from thy sleep 20
 Then wake to weep.

1821.

ADONAIS

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN
 KEATS, AUTHOR OF ENDYMION,
 HYPERION, ETC.

PREFACE¹

It is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modeled prove, at least, that I am an impartial judge. I consider the frag-

¹ Two quotations in Greek from Plato and Moschus are omitted here from the beginning of Shelley's preface. Otherwise it is intact.

ment of *Hyperion* as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the — of —¹ 1821; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now moldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where cankerworms abound, what wonder if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to *Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, *Paris* and *Woman* and a *Syrian Tale* and Mrs. Lefanu and Mr. Barrett and Mr. Howard Payne and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men who in their venal good nature presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the *Elegy* was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion* was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow

seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career — may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name! — Shelley:

Adonais, like Milton's *Lycidas* and Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis*, is a pastoral elegy, modelled on the Greek pastorals of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus. It is written in Spenserian stanzas.

I

I weep for Adonais — he is dead!
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a
head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure
compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow, say:
"With me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

2

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when
he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft
which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania?
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sat, while one, with soft enamored
breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the
corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of
Death.

3

Oh, weep for Adonais — he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and
weep!

¹ When he wrote this preface, Shelley did not know the day and month of Keats's death.

¹ The heavenly one, Muse of Astronomy; cf. Milton in *Paradise Lost*.

Yet wherefore? Quench within their
burning bed

Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and
fair

Descend. — Oh, dream not that the amor-
ous Deep ²⁵

Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at
our despair.

4

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania! — He died,
Who was the sire¹ of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's
pride, ³¹

The priest, the slave, and the libticide
Trampled and mocked with many a
loathèd rite

Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third² among the
sons of light. ³⁶

5

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to
climb;

And happier they their happiness who
knew,

Whose tapers yet burn through that night
of time ⁴⁰

In which suns perished; others more sub-
lime,

Struck by the envious wrath of man or
God,

Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent
prime;

And some yet live, treading the thorny
road,

Which leads, through toil and hate, to
Fame's serene abode. ⁴⁵

6

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has
perished,

The nursing of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden
cherished

And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew! ⁵⁰
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the
last,

The bloom, whose petals, nipped before
they blew,

Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies — the storm is overpast.

7

To that high Capital,¹ where kingly
Death ⁵⁵

Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest
breath,

A grave among the eternal. — Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still ⁶⁰
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;

Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

8

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —
Within the twilight chamber spreads
apace ⁶⁵

The shadow of white Death, and at the
door

Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to de-
face ⁷⁰

So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal
curtain draw.

9

Oh, weep for Adonais! — The quick
Dreams,

The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living
streams ⁷⁵

Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he
taught

The love which was its music, wander
not, —

Wander no more, from kindling brain to
brain,

But droop there, whence they sprung; and
mourn their lot

Round the cold heart, where, after their
sweet pain, ⁸⁰

They ne'er will gather strength, or find a
home again.

10

And one with trembling hands clasps his
cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings,
and cries;

¹ Milton.

² Who the other two poets are that Shelley had in mind
is debatable.

¹ Rome.

"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;

See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes, 85
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies

A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."

Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!

She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain

She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain. 90

11

One from a lucid urn of starry dew

Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them;

Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw

The wreath upon him, like an anadem,¹
Which frozen tears instead of pearls be- gem; 95

Another in her willful grief would break Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem

A greater loss with one which was more weak;

And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

12

Another Splendor on his mouth alit, 100
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath

Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,

And pass into the panting heart beneath With lightning and with music; the damp death

Quenched its caress upon his icy lips; 105
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath

Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night clips,

It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its eclipse.

13

And others came — Desires and Adorations,

Winged Persuasions and veiled Des- tinies, 110

Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations

Of hopes and fears, and twilight Fanta- sies;

And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,

And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam

¹ crown or chaplet.

Of her own dying smile instead of eyes, 115
Came in slow pomp; — the moving pomp might seem

Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

14

All he had loved, and molded into thought From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,

Lamented Adonais. Morning sought 120
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,

Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day; Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,

Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay, 125
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

15

Lost Echo ¹ sits amid the voiceless moun- tains,

And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,

And will no more reply to winds or foun- tains,

Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray, 130

Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day; Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear

Than those ² for whose disdain she pined away

Into a shadow of all sounds: — a drear

Murmur, between their songs, is all the wood- men hear. 135

16

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down

Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were, Or they dead leaves; since her delight is

flown,

For whom should she have waked the sul- len year?

To Phœbus was not Hyacinth ³ so dear 140
Nor to himself Narcissus,⁴ as to both

Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere Amid the faint companions of their youth,

With dew all turned to tears; odor, to sighing ruth.

¹ The forest nymph.
² Of Narcissus, a beautiful youth, who did not return Echo's love.

³ The youth whom Phœbus Apollo fell in love with and who, when he died, was transformed into a flower.

⁴ Narcissus fell in love with his own image reflected in a fountain. He, too, was changed into a flower.

17

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale, ¹⁴⁵
 Mourns not her mate with such melodious
 pain;
 Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
 Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's
 domain
 Her mighty youth with morning, doth
 complain,
 Soaring and screaming round her empty
 nest, ¹⁵⁰
 As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
 Light on his head who¹ pierced thy in-
 nocent breast,
 And scared the angel soul that was its
 earthly guest!

18

Ah, woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
 But grief returns with the revolving year;
 The airs and streams renew their joyous
 tone; ¹⁵⁶
 The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead
 Season's bier;
 The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
 And build their mossy homes in field and
 brere; ¹⁶⁰
 And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance
 awake.

19

Through wood and stream and field and
 hill and Ocean
 A quickening life from the Earth's heart
 has burst,
 As it has ever done, with change and
 motion, ¹⁶⁵
 From the great morning of the world when
 first
 God dawned on Chaos; in its stream im-
 mersed,
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer
 light;
 All baser things pant with life's sacred
 thirst;
 Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's
 delight ¹⁷⁰
 The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

20

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit
 tender,
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;

¹ The author of the reviews mentioned by Shelley in
 his introduction.
² briar.

Like incarnations of the stars, when
 splendor
 Is changed to fragrance, they illumine
 death ¹⁷⁵
 And mock the merry worm that wakes be-
 neath.
 Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone
 which knows
 Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
 By sightless lightning? — the intense atom
 glows
 A moment, then is quenched in a most cold
 repose. ¹⁸⁰

21

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
 But for our grief, as if it had not been,
 And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
 Whence are we, and why are we? of what
 scene
 The actors or spectators? Great and mean
 Meet massed in death, who lends what life
 must borrow. ¹⁸⁶
 As long as skies are blue and fields are
 green,
 Evening must usher night, night urge the
 morrow,
 Month follow month with woe, and year wake
 year to sorrow.

22

He will awake no more, oh, never more! ¹⁹⁰
 "Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless
 Mother, rise
 Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's
 core,
 A wound more fierce than his with tears
 and sighs."
 And all the Dreams that watched Urania's
 eyes,
 And all the Echoes whom their sister's
 song ¹⁹⁵
 Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise!"
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory
 stung,
 From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor
 sprung.

23

She rose like an autumnal Night, that
 springs
 Out of the East, and follows wild and
 drear ²⁰⁰
 The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
 Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and
 fear
 So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;

So saddened round her like an atmosphere 205

Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

24

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with
stone, and steel,

And human hearts, which to her airy
tread 210

Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell;
And barbed tongues, and thoughts more
sharp than they,

Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears
of May, 215

Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving
way.

25

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light 220
Flashed through those limbs, so late her
dear delight.

"Leave me not wild and drear and com-
fortless,

As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania; her distress

Roused Death; Death rose and smiled, and
met her vain caress. 225

26

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning
brain

That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else
survive,

With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part 231

Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!

But I am chained to Time, and cannot
thence depart!

27

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert, 235
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of
men

Too soon, and with weak hands though
mighty heart

Dare the unpastured dragon ¹ in his den?

¹ The hard world.

Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was
then

Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the
spear? 240

Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent
sphere,

The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee
like deer.

28

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the
dead; 245

The vultures to the conqueror's banner
true,

Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion; — how
they fled,

When, like Apollo, from his golden bow
The Pythian ² of the age one arrow sped 250

And smiled! — The spoilers tempt no
second blow,

They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them
lying low.

29

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles
spawn;

He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn, 255

And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men:

A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and
when

It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared
its light 260

Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful
night."

30

Thus ceased she; and the mountain shep-
herds came,

Their garlands sere, their magic mantles
rent;

The Pilgrim of Eternity, ³ whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent, 265

An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his
song

In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne ³ sent
The sweetest lyrist ⁴ of her saddest wrong,

And love taught grief to fall like music from
his tongue. 270

¹ Byron, who with his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* slew the critics with one blow, as Apollo did the python.

² Byron, so called because of his *Childe Harold*.

³ Ireland.

⁴ Thomas Moore.

31

Midst others of less note, came one frail
Form,¹

A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess, ²⁷⁴
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like,² and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged
way,

Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and
their prey. ²⁷⁹

32

A pardlike³ Spirit beautiful and swift —
A Love in desolation masked; — a Power
Girt round with weakness; — it can scarce
uplift

The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower, ²⁸⁴
A breaking billow; — even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the
heart may break.

33

His head was bound with pansies over-
blown,

And faded violets, white, and pied, and
blue; ²⁹⁰

And a light spear topped with a cypress
cone,

Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses
grew

Yet dripping with the forest's noonday
dew,

Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of
that crew ²⁹⁵

He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's
dart.

34

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that
gentle band ²⁹⁹

Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured:
"Who art thou?"

¹ Shelley.

² Actæon, the hunter, gazed upon Diana in bathing.
In punishment he was changed into a stag, and was torn
to pieces by his own dogs.

³ like a leopard.

He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined
brow, ³⁰⁵

Which was like Cain's or Christ's — oh! that
it should be so!

35

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle
thrown?

What form leans sadly o'er the white
death-bed,

In mockery of monumental stone, ³¹⁰
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He,¹ who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the de-
parted one,

Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

36

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh! ³¹⁶
What deaf and viperous murderer could
crown

Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself dis-
own;

It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and
wrong, ³²¹

But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,

Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver
lyre unstrung. ³²⁴

37

Live thou,² whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!

And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow;
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to
thee; ³³¹

Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt
— as now.

38

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream
below; ³³⁵

He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall
flow

¹ Leigh Hunt, who was one of Keats's closest friends.
² i.e., the critic.

Back to the burning fountain whence it
came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably
the same, 341
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid
hearth of shame.

39

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not
sleep —
He hath awakened from the dream of life —
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife, 346
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's
knife
Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our
living clay. 351

40

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow
stain 356
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in
vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to
burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

41

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead, not
he; 361
Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young
Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from
thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and
thou Air, 366
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst
thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it
bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its
despair!

42

He is made one with Nature: there is
heard 370
His voice in all her music, from the moan

Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and
stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may
move 375
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied
love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

43

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely; he doth
bear 380
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, com-
pelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks
its flight 384
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear,
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the
Heaven's light.

44

The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they
climb, 390
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty
thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life content in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live
there 395
And move like winds of light on dark and
stormy air.

45

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mor-
tal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton¹
Rose pale, — his solemn agony had not 400
Yet faded from him; Sidney,² as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan,³ by his death approved;
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing re-
proved. 405

¹ "The marvelous boy," 1752-1770, who at eighteen killed himself, after having written imitations of early English poetry which for a time passed as originals.

² Sir Philip Sidney; he died at thirty-two from a wound received in the battle of Zutphen in 1586.

³ The Roman poet, author of the *Pharsalia*, who at twenty-six killed himself to escape being executed by Nero.

46

And many more, whose names on Earth
are dark, .

But whose transmitted effluence cannot
die

So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality. 409

"Thou art become as one of us," they cry;

"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has
long

Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.

Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of
our throng!"

47

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh, come forth,
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him
aright. 416

Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous
Earth;

As from a center, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Sate the void circumference; then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee
sink 422

When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee
to the brink.

48

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh, not of him, but of our joy; 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there 426
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend, — they borrow
not

Glory from those who made the world their
prey;

And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's
decay, 431

And of the past are all that cannot pass
away.

49

Go thou to Rome, — at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered moun-
tains rise, 435

And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses
dress

The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,

Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass
is spread; 441

50

And gray walls moulder round, on which
dull Time

Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sub-
lime,

Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand 446

Like flame transformed to marble; and be-
neath,

A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp
of death,

Welcoming him we lose with scarce extin-
guished breath. 450

51

Here pause: these graves are all too young
as yet

To have outgrown the sorrow which con-
signed

Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter
wind 457

Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.

What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

52

The One remains, the many change and
pass; 460

Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's
shadows fly;

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments. —
Die,

If thou wouldst be with that which thou
dost seek! 465

Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure
sky,

Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are
weak

The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to
speak.

53

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,
my Heart?

Thy hopes are gone before; from all things
here 470

They have departed; thou shouldst now
depart!

A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is
dear

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee
wither.
The soft sky smiles, — the low wind whis-
pers near; 475
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join
together.

54

That Light whose smile kindles the Uni-
verse,
That Beauty in which all things work and
move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining
Love 481
Which through the web of being blindly
wove
By man and beast and earth and air and
sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on
me, 485
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

55

The breath whose might I have invoked in
song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is
driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling
through
Whose sails were never to the tempest
given; 490
The massy earth and spherèd skies are
riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of
Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal
are. 495

1821.

THE FINAL CHORUS FROM HELLAS

SEMICHORUS I

Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream,
Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying day!
I saw her, ghastly as a tyrant's dream,
Perch on the trembling pyramid of night,
Beneath which earth and all her realms
pavilioned lay 5
In visions of the dawning undelight.
Who shall impede her flight?
Who rob her of her prey?

Voice without. Victory! Victory! Russia's
famished eagles
Dare not to prey beneath the crescent's
light. 10
Impale the remnant of the Greeks! de-
spoil!
Violate! make their flesh cheaper than dust!

SEMICHORUS II

Thou voice which art
The herald of the ill in splendor hid!
Thou echo of the hollow heart 15
Of monarchy, bear me to thine abode
When desolation flashes o'er a world de-
stroyed:
Oh, bear me to those isles of jagged cloud
Which float like mountains on the
earthquake, mid
The momentary oceans of the light-
ning, 20
Or to some toppling promontory
proud
Of solid tempest, whose black pyra-
mid,
Riven, overhangs the founts intensely
bright'ning
Of those dawn-tinted deluges of fire
Before their waves expire, 25
When heaven and earth are light, and only
light
In the thunder-night!

Voice without. Victory! Victory! Aus-
tria, Russia, England,
And that tame serpent, that poor shadow,
France,
Cry peace, and that means death when mon-
archs speak, 30
Ho, there! bring torches, sharpen those red
stakes,
These chains are light, fitter for slaves and
prisoners
Than Greeks. Kill! plunder! burn! let none
remain.

SEMICHORUS I

Alas! for Liberty!
If numbers, wealth, or unfilling years, 35
Or fate, can quell the free!
Alas for Virtue! when
Torments, or contumely, or the sneers
Of erring judging men
Can break the heart where it abides! 40
Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this obscure
world splendid,
Can change with its false times and tides,
Like hope and terror, —
Alas for Love!

And Truth, who wanderest lone and un-
 friended, 45
 If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming mirror
 Before the dazzled eyes of Error,
 Alas for thee! Image of the Above!

SEMICHORUS II

Repulse, with plumes from conquest torn,
 Led the ten thousand from the limits of the
 morn 50

Through many an hostile Anarchy!
 At length they wept aloud, and cried, "The
 Sea! the Sea!"

Through exile, persecution, and despair,
 Rome was, and young Atlantis¹ shall
 become

The wonder, or the terror, or the tomb
 Of all whose step wakes Power lulled in her
 savage lair. 56

But Greece was as a hermit-child,
 Whose fairest thoughts and limbs were
 built

To woman's growth, by dreams so mild,
 She knew not pain or guilt; 60
 And now, O Victory, blush! and Empire,
 tremble,

When ye desert the free —

If Greece must be

A wreck, yet shall its fragments reassemble,
 And build themselves again impregnably 65
 In a diviner clime,

To Amphionic² music on some Cape sublime
 Which frowns above the idle foam of Time.

SEMICHORUS I

Let the tyrants rule the desert they have
 made;

Let the free possess the Paradise they
 claim; 70

Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors
 weighed

With our ruin, our resistance, and our
 name!

SEMICHORUS II

Our dead shall be the seed of their decay,
 Our survivors be the shadow of their pride,
 Our adversity a dream to pass away — 75
 Their dishonor a remembrance to abide!

Voice without. Victory! Victory! The
 bought Briton sends

The keys of ocean to the Islamite.³ —

¹ The new world; the name is from the mythical island
 which is supposed to have sunk beneath the ocean, west
 of the Pillars of Hercules.

² Amphion rebuilt the walls of Thebes by playing on
 his lyre.

³ Mohammedan.

Now shall the blazon of the cross be veiled,
 And British skill, directing Othman¹ might,
 Thunder-strike rebel victory. Oh, keep
 holy 81

This jubilee of unrevenged blood!
 Kill! crush! despoil! Let not a Greek es-
 cape!

SEMICHORUS I

Darkness has dawned in the East
 On the noon of time; 85

The death-birds descend to their feast
 From the hungry clime.

Let Freedom and Peace flee far
 To a sunnier strand,
 And follow Love's folding-star 90
 To the Evening land!

SEMICHORUS II

The young moon has fed
 Her exhausted horn
 With the sunset's fire;
 The weak day is dead, 95

But the night is not born;
 And, like loveliness panting with wild de-
 sire,

While it trembles with fear and delight,
 Hesperus flies from awakening night,
 And pants in its beauty and speed with
 light 100

Fast-flashing, soft, and bright.
 Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the free!
 Guide us far, far away,
 To climes where now, veiled by the ardor of
 day,

Thou art hidden 105

From waves on which weary Noon
 Faints in her summer swoon,
 Between kingless continents, sinless as
 Eden,

Around mountains and islands inviolably
 Pranked on the sapphire sea. 110

SEMICHORUS I

Through the sunset of hope,
 Like the shapes of a dream,
 What Paradise islands of glory gleam!
 Beneath Heaven's cope,
 Their shadows more clear float by; 115
 The sound of their oceans, the light of their
 sky,

The music and fragrance their solitudes
 breathe.

Burst, like morning on dream, or like Heaven
 on death,

Through the walls of our prison;
 And Greece, which was dead, is arisen! 120

¹ Ottoman, Turkish.

CHORUS

The world's great age begins anew,
 The golden years return,
 The earth doth like a snake renew
 Her winter weeds outworn;
 Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires
 gleam,
 Like wrecks of a dissolving dream. 125

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
 From waves serenest far;
 A new Peneus ¹ rolls his fountains
 Against the morning star. 130
 Where fairer Tempes ² bloom, there sleep
 Young Cyclads ³ on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo ⁴ cleaves the main,
 Fraught with a later prize;
 Another Orpheus sings again, 135
 And loves, and weeps, and dies.
 A new Ulysses leaves once more
 Calypso ⁵ for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
 If earth Death's scroll must be! 140
 Nor mix with Laiān ⁶ rage the joy
 Which dawns upon the free;
 Although a subtler Sphinx renew
 Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise, 145
 And to remoter time
 Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
 The splendor of its prime;
 And leave, if nought so bright may live,
 All earth can take or Heaven can give. 150

Saturn and Love their long repose
 Shall burst, more bright and good
 Than all who fell, than One who rose,
 Than many unsubdued;
 Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
 But votive tears and symbol flowers. 156

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?
 Cease! must men kill and die?
 Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
 Of bitter prophecy. 160
 The world is weary of the past,
 Oh, might it die or rest at last!

1821.

¹ A river in Greece.² Beautiful vales.³ Cyclades, islands in the Ægean.⁴ The ship in which Jason and his Argonauts sailed to Colchis to get the golden fleece.⁵ The nymph who detained Ulysses on her island when he was returning from Troy.⁶ Referring to Laius, King of Thebes, husband of Jocasta. It was fated that his son (Edipus, who solved the riddle of the Sphinx, should kill him and marry Jocasta.

TO —

I

One word is too often profaned
 For me to profane it,
 One feeling too falsely disdained
 For thee to disdain it;
 One hope is too like despair
 For prudence to smother,
 And pity from thee more dear
 Than that from another.

5

2

I can give not what men call love,
 But wilt thou accept not 10
 The worship the heart lifts above
 And the Heavens reject not, —
 The desire of the moth for the star,
 Of the night for the morrow,
 The devotion to something afar 15
 From the sphere of our sorrow?

1821.

LINES: WHEN THE LAMP IS
SHATTERED

I

When the lamp is shattered,
 The light in the dust lies dead;
 When the cloud is scattered,
 The rainbow's glory is shed.
 When the lute is broken, 5
 Sweet tones are remembered not;
 When the lips have spoken,
 Loved accents are soon forgot.

2

As music and splendor
 Survive not the lamp and the lute, 10
 The heart's echoes render
 No song when the spirit is mute:
 No song but sad dirges,
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,
 Or the mournful surges 15
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

3

When hearts have once mingled,
 Love first leaves the well-built nest;
 The weak one is singled 20
 To endure what it once possessed.
 O Love! who bewailest
 The frailty of all things here,
 Why choose you the frailest
 For your cradle, your home, and your
 bier?

4

Its passions will rock thee,
 As the storms rock the ravens on high;
 Bright reason will mock thee,
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.
 From thy nest every rafter
 Will rot, and thine eagle home
 Leave thee naked to laughter,
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.

25

30

1822.

A DIRGE

Rough wind, that moanest loud
 Grief too sad for song;
 Wild wind, when sullen cloud
 Knells all the night long;
 Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
 Bare woods, whose branches strain,
 Deep caves and dreary main, —
 Wail, for the world's wrong!

1822.

JOHN KEATS (1795–1821)

John Keats, poet of beauty like his avowed master Spenser, was born in London, October 29, 1795. His father kept the livery-stable of an inn; his mother was the innkeeper's daughter. He received his schooling at Mr. Clarke's private school in Enfield, where he became deeply attached to the headmaster's son, Charles Cowden Clarke.

In 1804 Keats's father died; in 1810, his mother. The young poet, an orphan at fifteen, was taken from school by his guardians and apprenticed to a surgeon. He remained a surgeon's apprentice almost five years, developing more than usual skill in his profession. What was important during these years, however, was his continued friendship with Clarke, whose influence upon Keats's literary tastes was strong. Through him Keats became acquainted with Spenser and Chapman and other poets of the past; and from them came his own determination to be a poet.

In 1814 Keats moved to London to study medicine in a hospital. But he continued the practice, begun in Enfield, of writing verses. In the next two or three years he met, through Clarke, Leigh Hunt, Shelley, Hazlitt, Wordsworth, and other writers. In 1816 he contributed some poems to Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*; and in 1817 his medical career came definitely to an end with the publication of his first volume, *Poems*. The book caused little stir, except among his friends. In the following year he published *Endymion*. This brought forth a torrent of abusive and savage criticism, especially from *Blackwood's Magazine* and *The Quarterly Review*. The attack did not hurt Keats as deeply as commentators once thought. He knew as well as any one what the faults of his poem were. The simple fact was, he stated later, that *Endymion* was as good as he could make it then, and he thought it best to let the poem go forth as it was, rather than to torture it and himself by trying fruitlessly to improve it at the time. The reference in the reviews to his being a cockney, Keats ignored.

What did harass Keats was the beginnings of hereditary consumption. A vacation trip to the Lakes and Scotland had helped the fever and the hemorrhages very little; and close upon his return to Hampstead in the fall of 1818 there followed not only the bitter reviews of his second volume, but likewise his first meeting with Fanny Brawne, with whom he fell hopelessly in love, and the death from consumption of his brother Tom.

In the face of all this, Keats did his greatest work. During the next eighteen months, though racked by disease and torn by his love for Fanny Brawne, but tenderly cared for by his friends, Keats composed most of the poems that have made him immortal. These he published in his third and last volume, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems*, in July, 1820.

The kindness and nursing of the Hunts and Mrs. Brawne and Fanny brought him much ease and comfort, but no permanent relief. In September, with his friend Severn, he set sail for the milder climate of Italy. After a valiant struggle, but, towards the end, yearning for death to come, he died in Rome, February 23, 1821, and was buried three days later in the Protestant cemetery, near the tomb of Caius Cestius.

Keats is the poet of sensuous beauty. While his verse comes perilously near at times to mere sensuousness, his best poems exemplify his belief that ultimate truth may be arrived at through the senses. The truth behind the experience, not the sensation itself, is what counts. Keats, accordingly, has more thought in his poems than is generally admitted.

To Keats truth is beauty, and the effect of beauty is joy. By the magic of his imagination he produced a world of glamour, but a world that is true nevertheless. He is preëminently the artist, seeking perfection of form. In his best poems he achieved it.

Good one-volume editions of Keats are the Oxford (Oxford University Press), the Globe (Macmillan), and the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company). The Standard biographies are by Sidney Colvin in the English Men of Letters Series and by Amy Lowell (Houghton Mifflin Company).

SONNET

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER¹

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
 Round many western islands have I been
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
 Oft of one wide expanse had I been told⁵
 That deep-browed Homer ruled as his
 demesne:

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
 Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
 When a new planet swims into his ken;¹⁰
 Or like stout Cortez² when with eagle eyes
 He stared at the Pacific — and all his men
 Looked at each other with a wild surmise —
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

1815.

TO MY BROTHERS³

Small, busy flames play through the fresh
 laid coals,
 And their faint cracklings o'er our silence
 creep
 Like whispers of the household gods that
 keep

A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.

And while, for rhymes, I search around the
 poles,⁵

Your eyes are fixed, as in poetic sleep,
 Upon the lore so voluble and deep,
 That aye at fall of night our care condoles.
 This is your birth-day Tom,⁴ and I rejoice
 That thus it passes smoothly, quietly.¹⁰
 Many such eves of gently whisp'ring noise
 May we together pass, and calmly try
 What are this world's true joys, — ere the
 great voice,

From its fair face, shall bid our spirits fly.

November 18, 1816.

PROEM TO ENDYMION

This poem is Keats's version of the story of
 Endymion, the beautiful boy, in love with the
 goddess of the moon.

BOOK I

PROEM

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
 Its loveliness increases; it will never

¹ Written early one autumn morning after sitting up all night reading Chapman's translation of Homer with his friend Clarke.

² It was, of course, Balboa who discovered the Pacific.

³ George, two years younger than the poet, and Thomas, three years younger.

⁴ Thomas died two years later, December, 1818. Keats nursed him through his illness.

Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet
 breathing.⁵

Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreath-
 ing

A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
 Made for our searching: yes, in spite of
 all,¹¹

Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the
 moon,

Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
 For simple sheep; and such are daffodils¹⁵
 With the green world they live in; and clear
 rills

That for themselves a cooling covert make
 'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose
 blooms:

And such too is the grandeur of the dooms²⁰
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;
 All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences²⁵
 For one short hour; no, even as the trees
 That whisper round a temple become soon
 Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
 The passion poesy, glories infinite,
 Haunt us till they become a cheering light
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,³¹
 That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'er-
 cast,

They always must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness that I
 Will trace the story of Endymion.³⁵
 The very music of the name has gone
 Into my being, and each pleasant scene
 Is growing fresh before me as the green
 Of our own vallies: so I will begin
 Now while I cannot hear the city's din;⁴⁰
 Now while the early budders are just new,
 And run in mazes of the youngest hue
 About old forests; while the willow trails
 Its delicate amber; and the dairy pails
 Bring home increase of milk. And, as the
 year⁴⁵

Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly steer
 My little boat, for many quiet hours,
 With streams that deepen freshly into bowers.
 Many and many a verse I hope to write,
 Before the daisies, vermeil rimmed and white,

Hid in deep herbage; and ere yet the bees 51
Hum about globes of clover and sweet
peas,

I must be near the middle of my story.
O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,
See it half finished: but let Autumn bold, 55
With universal tinge of sober gold,
Be all about me when I make an end.¹
And now at once, adventuresome, I send
My herald thought into a wilderness:
There let its trumpet blow, and quickly
dress 60
My uncertain path with green, that I may
speed

Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.

1817.

ROBIN HOOD

TO A FRIEND²

No! those days are gone away,
And their hours are old and gray,
And their minutes buried all
Under the down-trodden pall
Of the leaves of many years: 5
Many times have Winter's shears,
Frozen North, and chilling East,
Sounded tempests to the feast
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
Since men knew nor rent nor leases. 10

No, the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow no more;
Silent is the ivy shrill
Past the heath and up the hill;
There is no mid-forest laugh, 15
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amazed to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon, 20
Or the seven stars³ to light you,
Or the polar ray⁴ to right you;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold;
Never one, of all the clan, 25
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent; 5 30

¹ Keats actually kept to this schedule, beginning the poem late in April and completing it late in November, 1817.

² J. H. Reynolds, who had sent him some poems on Robin Hood.

³ The Dipper.

⁴ The North Star.

⁵ In Sherwood Forest.

For he left the merry tale,
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
Gone, the song of Gamelyn;¹
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw 35
Idling in the "grenè shawe;"²
All are gone away and past!
And if Robin should be cast
Sudden from his turfed grave,
And if Marian should have 40
Once again her forest days,
She would weep, and he would craze:
He would swear, for all his oaks,
Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,
Have rotted on the briny seas; 45
She would weep that her wild bees
Sang not to her — strange! that honey
Can't be got without hard money!

So it is; yet let us sing
Honor to the old bow-string! 50
Honor to the bugle horn!
Honor to the woods unshorn!
Honor to the Lincoln green!
Honor to the archer keen!
Honor to tight Little John, 55
And the horse he rode upon!
Honor to bold Robin Hood,
Sleeping in the underwood!
Honor to Maid Marian,
And to all the Sherwood clan! 60
Though their days have hurried by,
Let us two a burden³ try.

February, 1818.

STANZAS

I

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:
The north cannot undo them, 5
With a sleety whistle through them;
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

2

In a drear-nighted December
Too happy, happy brook, 10
Thy bubbings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,

¹ An outlaw, hero of a story once supposed to be Chaucer's.

² green wood.

³ song.

Never, never petting ¹
About the frozen time.

3

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passed joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbed sense to steel it,
Was never said in rhyme.

1818?

LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN ²

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern? ³
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his maid Marian,
Sup and bowse ⁴ from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away,
Nobody knew whither, till
An astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new old-sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

1818.

FANCY

Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;

15 Then let winged Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use, 10
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
20 Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then? 15
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled 20
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad, 25
With a mind self-overawed,
Fancy, high-commissioned: — send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost; 30
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heaped Autumn's wealth, 35
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it: — thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear; 40
Rustle of the reaped corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment — hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw, 45
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
25 White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst; 50
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep 55
Meagre from its celled sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree 60
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;

¹ showing ill-humor.² Sent, along with *Robin Hood*, to his friend Reynolds.³ The famous rendezvous in London of the Elizabethan dramatists and poets.⁴ drink.

Then the hurry and alarm
 When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
 Acorns ripe down-pattering, 65
 While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
 Every thing is spoilt by use;
 Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
 Too much gazed at? Where's the maid
 Whose lip mature is ever new? 71
 Where's the eye, however blue,
 Doth not weary? Where's the face
 One would meet in every place?
 Where's the voice, however soft, 75
 One would hear so very oft?
 At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
 Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
 Let, then, winged Fancy find
 Thee a mistress to thy mind: 80
 Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter¹
 Ere the God of Torment taught her
 How to frown and how to chide;
 With a waist and with a side
 White as Hebe's,² when her zone 85
 Slipt its golden clasp, and down
 Fell her kirtle to her feet,
 While she held the goblet sweet,
 And Jove grew languid. — Break the
 mesh
 Of the Fancy's silken leash; 90
 Quickly break her prison-string,
 And such joys as these she'll bring. —
 Let the winged Fancy roam,
 Pleasure never is at home.

r818.

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

I
 St. Agnes' Eve³ — Ah, bitter chill it
 was!
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-
 cold;
 The hare limped trembling through the
 frozen grass,
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
 Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while
 he told 5
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
 Like pious incense from a censer old,
 Seemed taking flight for heaven, without
 a death,
 Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his
 prayer he saith.

2
 His prayer he saith, this patient, holy
 man; 10
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his
 knees,
 And back returneth, meagre, barefoot,
 wan,
 Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
 The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to
 freeze,
 Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails: 15
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods
 and mails.

3
 Northward he turneth through a little
 door,
 And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden
 tongue 20
 Flattered to tears this aged man and poor;
 But no — already had his death-bell rung:
 The joys of all his life were said and
 sung:
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
 Another way he went, and soon among 25
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
 And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to
 grieve.

4
 That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude
 soft;
 And so it chanced, for many a door was
 wide,
 From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft, 30
 The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to
 chide:
 The level chambers, ready with their pride,
 Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
 The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
 Stared, where upon their heads the cornice
 rests, 35
 With hair blown back, and wings put cross-
 wise on their breasts.

5
 At length burst in the argent revelry,
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
 Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
 The brain, new-stuffed, in youth, with
 triumphs gay 40
 Of old romance. These let us wish away,
 And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady
 there,
 Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry
 day,

¹ Proserpine, Pluto's wife. ² Cupbearer of the gods.
³ St. Agnes' Day is January 21. The night before, ac-
 cording to tradition, is always extremely cold.

On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly
care,
As she had heard old dames full many times
declare. 45

6

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of de-
light,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright; 50
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily
white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they
desire. 54

7

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping
train
Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier, 60
And back retired; not cooled by high dis-
dain,
But she saw not: her heart was elsewhere;
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of
the year.

8

She danced along with vague, regardless
eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and
short; 65
The hallowed hour was near at hand: she
sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged
resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and
scorn, 69
Hoodwinked with faery fancy; all amorn,¹
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs² unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow
morn.

9

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She lingered still. Meantime, across the
moors,

¹ dead.

² On the anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Agnes,
a Roman virgin, two lambs were blessed while the *Agnus
Dei* (Lamb of God) was sung. The lambs were later
shorn and the wool made into cloth by nuns.

Had come young Porphyro, with heart on
fire 75
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and
implores

All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all un-
seen; 80
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in
sooth such things have been.

10

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous cita-
del:
For him, those chambers held barbarian
hordes, 85
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in
soul. 90

11

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's
flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond 94
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasped his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from
this place;
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-
thirsty race!

12

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish
Hildebrand; 100
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursed thee and thine, both house and
land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a
whit
More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me!
flit!
Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip¹
dear, 105
We're safe enough; here in this armchair sit,
And tell me how" — Good Saints! not
here, not here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be
thy bier."

¹ Godmother.

13

He followed through a lowly arched way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;
And as she muttered "Well-a — well-a-
day!"

111

He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said
he,

"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom 115
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving,
piously."

14

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and
Fays,

121

To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to
grieve."

126

15

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepest closed a wond'rous riddle-
book,

130

As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she
told

His lady's purpose; and he scarce could
brook¹

Tears, at the thought of those enchant-
ments cold,

And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old. 135

16

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown
rose,

Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame
start:

"A cruel man and impious thou art: 140
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and
dream

Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I
deem

Thou canst not surely be the same that thou
didst seem."

¹ check (used erroneously).

17

"I will not harm her, by all saints I
swear,"

145

Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find
grace

When my weak voice shall whisper its last
prayer,

If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears; 150
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's
ears,

And beard them, though they be more fanged
than wolves and bears."

18

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard
thing,

155

Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight
toll;

Whose prayers for thee, each morn and
evening,

Were never missed." Thus plaining, doth
she bring

A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing, 160

That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or
woe.

19

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy 165
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless
bride,

While legion'd faeries paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-
eyed.

Never on such a night have lovers met, 170
Since Merlin paid his Demon¹ all the mon-
strous debt.

20

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the
Dame:

"All cates² and dainties shall be stored
there

Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambor
frame³

Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to
spare,

175

¹ Merlin, the son of a demon, was destroyed by Vivien,
who used the magic that he had taught her. See Tenny-
son's *Merlin and Vivien*.

² delicacies.

³ A drum-shaped embroidery frame.

For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
 On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
 Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel
 in prayer
 The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady
 wed,
 Or may I never leave my grave among the
 dead." 180

21

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
 The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;
 The Dame returned, and whispered in his
 ear
 To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
 From fright of dim espial. Safe at last, 185
 Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
 The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed and
 chaste;
 Where Porphyro took covert, pleased
 amain.¹
 His poor guide hurried back with agues in her
 brain.

22

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade,
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair, 191
 When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed
 maid,
 Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:
 With silver taper's light, and pious care,
 She turned, and down the aged gossip
 led 195
 To a safe level matting.² Now prepare,
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove
 frayed³ and fled.

23

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
 She closed the door, she panted, all akin 201
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side; 205
 As though a tongueless nightingale should
 swell
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled in
 her dell.

24

A casement high and triple-arched there
 was,
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of
 knot-grass, 210

1 tremendously. 2 straw carpet. 3 frightened.

And diamonded with panes of quaint de-
 vice,
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked
 wings;
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand her-
 aldries,
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazon-
 ings, 215
 A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood
 of queens and kings.

25

Full on this casement shone the wintry
 moon,
 And threw warm gules¹ on Madeline's
 fair breast,
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and
 boon;
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together
 prest, 220
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
 Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew
 faint:
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal
 taint. 225

26

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
 Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
 Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her
 knees: 230
 Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
 In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm
 is fled.

27

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly
 nest, 235
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she
 lay,
 Until the popped warmth of sleep op-
 pressed
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
 Flown, like a thought, until the morn-
 day;
 Blissfully havened both from joy and
 pain; 240
 Clasped² like a missal³ where swart Pay-
 nims⁴ pray;

1 red (a term in heraldry).
 3 prayer-book.

2 Here, tightly shut.
 4 Pagans.

Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud
again.

28

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress, ²⁴⁵
And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he
bless,
And breathed himself: then from the closet
crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness, ²⁵⁰
And over the hushed carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo! —
how fast she slept.

29

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguished, threw
thereon ²⁵⁵
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying
tone: — ²⁶⁰
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise
is gone.

30

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavendered,
While he from forth the closet brought a
heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and
gourd; ²⁶⁵
With jellies soother ¹ than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Leb-
anon. ²⁷⁰

31

These delicacies he heaped with glowing
hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume
light. — ²⁷⁵
“And now, my love, my seraph fair,
awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite: ²

¹ smoother.² hermit; here, devoted follower.

Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth
ache.”

32

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved
arm ²⁸⁰
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains: — 'twas a midnight
charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight
gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies: ²⁸⁵
It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mused awhile, entailed in woofed phan-
tasies.

33

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —
Tumultuous, — and, in chords that ten-
derest be, ²⁹⁰
He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called “La belle dame sans
mercy:”
Close to her ear touching the melody: —
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft
moan:
He ceased — she panted quick — and sud-
denly ²⁹⁵
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-
sculptured stone.

34

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that night
expelled ³⁰⁰
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many
a sigh;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would
keep;
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous
eye, ³⁰⁵
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so
dreamingly.

35

“Ah, Porphyro!” said she, “but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine
ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and
clear:

310

How changed thou art! how pallid, chill,
and drear!

Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings
dear!

Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where
to go." 315

36

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep
repose;

Into her dream he melted, as the rose 320
Blendeth its odor with the violet, —
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind
blows

Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon
hath set.

37

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-
blown¹ sleet: 325

"This is no dream, my bride, my Made-
line!"

'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and
pine. —

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither
bring? 330

I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing; —
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned
wing."

38

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely
bride!

Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest? 335
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and
vermeil² dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famished pilgrim, — saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy
nest 340

Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st
well

To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

39

"Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:

¹ wind-blown.

² vermilion.

Arise — arise! the morning is at hand: — 345
The bloated wassailers will never heed: —
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —
Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy
mead:

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be, 350
For o'er the southern moors I have a home
for thee."

40

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready
spears —

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they
found. — 355

In all the house was heard no human
sound.

A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by
each door;

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and
hound,

Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty
floor. 360

41

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide
hall;

Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:

The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook
his hide, 365

But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide: —
The chains lie silent on the footworn
stones; —

The key turns, and the door upon its hinges
groans.

42

And they are gone: aye, ages long ago 370
These lovers fled away into the storm.

That night the Baron dreamt of many a
woe,

And all his warrior-guests, with shade and
form

Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-
worm,

Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face
deform; 376

The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes
cold.

ODE

Keats wrote the poem in his copy of Beaumont and Fletcher, on the blank page before *The Fair Maid of the Inn*.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?
Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wond'rous
And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, tranced thing,
But divine melodious truth;
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you,
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumbered, never cloying.
Here, your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim.
Thus ye teach us, every day,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new!
1819.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

I

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our
rhyme:

What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy
shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens
loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild
ecstasy?

2

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play
on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not
leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou
kiss,
Though winning near the goal — yet, do not
grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not
thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

3

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new.
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and
cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching
tongue.

4

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands
drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

5

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
1 braid, embroidery.

With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of
thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral! 45

When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou
say'st,

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty," — that is
all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to
know. 50

1819.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

I

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness
pains

My sense, as though of hemlock¹ I had
drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had
sunk:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the
trees,

In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated
ease. 10

2

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-
burnt mirth!

O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,²
With beaded bubbles winking at the
brim,

And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world
unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest
dim: 20

3

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never
known,

The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other
groan;

¹ poison.

² The Muses' fountain on Helicon.

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray
hairs, 25

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin,
and dies;

Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,

Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous
eyes,

Or new Love pine at them beyond to-
morrow. 30

4

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,¹

But on the viewless² wings of Poesy,

Though the dull brain perplexes and re-
tards:

Already with thee! tender is the night, 35

And haply the Queen-Moon is on her
throne,

Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,

Save what from heaven is with the breezes
blown

Though verdurous glooms and winding
mossy ways. 40

5

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the
boughs,

But, in embalmed³ darkness, guess each sweet

Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree

wild; 45

White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglan-
tine;

Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,

The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on sum-
mer eves. 50

6

Darkling I listen; and for many a time

I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a mused

rhyme,

To take into the air my quiet breath;

Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55

To cease upon the midnight with no pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy soul
abroad

In such an ecstasy!

Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in
vain —

To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

¹ leopards.

² invisible.

³ fragrant.

7
Thou wast not born for death, immortal
Bird!

No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a
path 65
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick
for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;¹
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the
foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

8
Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75
Past the near meadows, over the still
stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried
deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or
sleep? 80
May, 1819.

ODE ON MELANCHOLY

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous
wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Prosper-
pine;²
Make not your rosary of yew-berries, 5
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche,³ nor the downy
owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the
soul. 10

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose, 15
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;

Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless
eyes. 20

She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that must
die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight 25
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose
strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate
fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung. 30
1819.

TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-
eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-
trees, 5
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel
shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease, 10
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their
clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing
wind; 15
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while
thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined
flowers;
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook; 20
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by
hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where
are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music
too, —

¹ See Ruth, II.

² Queen of the lower regions.

³ The soul, often symbolized by the butterfly.

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying
 day, 25
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy
 hue;
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
 Among the river shallows,¹ borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly
 bourn;² 30
 Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble
 soft
 The redbreast whistles from a garden-
 croft,
 And gathering swallows twitter in the
 skies.

r819.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

Keats took the title of the poem, "The Beautiful Lady without Pity," from an old French poem by Alain Chartier, which he probably knew through a translation that was once ascribed to Chaucer. The two poems are alike only in title.

"Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge has withered from the lake,
 And no birds sing.

"Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight, 5
 So haggard and so woe-begone?
 The squirrel's granary is full,
 And the harvest's done.

"I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever-dew, 10
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast withereth too."

"I met a lady in the meads,
 Full beautiful — a faery's child;
 Her hair was long, her foot was light, 15
 And her eyes were wild.

"I set her on my pacing steed,
 And nothing else saw all day long;
 For sideways would she lean, and sing
 A faery's song. 20

"I made a garland for her head,
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
 She looked at me as she did love,
 And made sweet moan.

"She found me roots of relish sweet, 25
 And honey wild and manna-dew;

1 willows. 2 country.

And sure in language strange she said,
 'I love thee true.'

"She took me to her elfin grot,
 And there she gazed and sighed deep, 30
 And there I shut her with wild eyes —
 So kissed to sleep.

"And there we slumbered on the moss,
 And there I dreamed — ah! woe betide! —
 The latest dream I ever dreamed 35
 On the cold hill side.

"I saw pale kings, and princes too,
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
 They cried — 'La belle Dame sans Merci
 Hath thee in thrall!' 40

"I saw their starved lips in the gloam
 With horrid warning gaped wide,
 And I awoke, and found me here
 On the cold hill side.

"And this is why I sojourn here 45
 Alone and palely loitering,
 Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
 And no birds sing."

April-May, 1819.

TWO SONNETS ON FAME

Fame, like a wayward Girl, will still be coy
 To those who woo her with too slavish
 knees,
 But makes surrender to some thoughtless
 Boy,
 And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;
 She is a Gipsy, will not speak to those 5
 Who have not learned to be content with-
 out her;
 A Jilt, whose ear was never whispered close,
 Who thinks they scandal her who talk
 about her;
 A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,¹
 Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;² 10
 Ye love-sick Bards, repay her scorn for scorn,
 Ye Artists lovelorn, madmen that ye are!
 Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,
 Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

2

"You cannot eat your cake and have it too." — *Proverb*.
 How fevered is the man, who cannot look 15
 Upon his mortal days with temperate
 blood,

1 Gypsies were supposed to come from Egypt.

2 One of Pharaoh's officers, whose wife loved Joseph.

Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,
 And robs his fair name of its maidenhood;
 It is as if the rose should pluck herself,
 Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom, ²⁰
 As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,
 Should darken her pure grot with muddy
 gloom;

But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,
 For winds to kiss and grateful bees to
 feed,

And the ripe plum still wears its dim at-
 tire, ²⁵

The undisturbed lake has crystal space;
 Why then should man, teasing the world
 for grace,

Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?

1819.

TO SLEEP

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,
 Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,
 Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the
 light,

Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:

O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close ⁵
 In midst of this thine hymn my willing eyes,

Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
 Around my bed its lulling charities.

Then save me, or the passed day will shine
 Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, — ¹⁰

Save me from curious Conscience, that
 still lords

Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a
 mole;

Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
 And seal the hushed Casket of my Soul.

1819.

SONNET

TO A YOUNG LADY WHO SENT ME A
 LAUREL CROWN

Fresh morning gusts have blown away all
 fear

From my glad bosom, — now from gloom-
 iness

I mount for ever — not an atom less
 Than the proud laurel shall content my bier.

No! by the eternal stars! or why sit here ⁵
 In the Sun's eye, and 'gainst my temples

press

Apollo's very leaves, woven to bless

By thy white fingers and thy spirit clear.

Lo! who dares say, "Do this?" Who dares
 call down

My will from its high purpose? Who say,
 "Stand," ¹⁰

Or "Go?" This mighty moment I would
 frown

On abject Cæsars — not the stoutest band
 Of mailed heroes should tear off my crown:

Yet would I kneel and kiss thy gentle hand!

1819?

LAMIA

Keats himself added the following quotation
 from Burton as a note to the poem:

"Philostratus, in his fourth book *de Vita Apollonii*, hath a memorable instance in this kind, which I may not omit, of one Menippus Lycius, a young man twenty-five years of age, that going betwixt Cenchreas and Corinth, met such a phantasm in the habit of a fair gentlewoman, which, taking him by the hand, carried him home to her house, in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a Phœnician by birth, and if he would tarry with her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink such wine as never any drank, and no man should molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would live and die with him, that was fair and lovely to behold. The young man, a philosopher, otherwise staid and discreet, able to moderate his passions, though not this of love, tarried with her a while to his great content, and at last married her, to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures, found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described by Homer, no substance but mere illusions. When she saw herself descried, she wept, and desired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all that was in it, vanished in an instant: many thousands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the midst of Greece." (Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part 3. Sect. 2. Memb. 1. Subs. 1.)

PART I

Upon a time, before the faery broods
 Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous
 woods,

Before king Oberon's bright diadem,
 Sceptre, and mantle, clasped with dewy gem,
 Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns ⁵
 From rushes green, and brakes, and cow-
 slipped lawns,

The ever-smitten Hermes empty left
 His golden throne, bent warm on amorous
 theft:

From high Olympus had he stolen light,
 On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the
 sight ¹⁰

Of his great summoner, and made retreat
 Into a forest on the shores of Crete.

For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt
 A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt;

At whose white feet the languid Tritons
 poured ¹⁵
 Pearls, while on land they withered and
 adored.
 Fast by the springs where she to bathe was
 wont,
 And in those meads where sometime she
 might haunt,
 Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any
 Muse,
 Though Fancy's casket were unlocked to
 choose. ²⁰
 Ah, what a world of love was at her feet!
 So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat
 Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,
 That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,
 Blushed into roses 'mid his golden hair, ²⁵
 Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders
 bare.

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he
 flew,
 Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,
 And wound with many a river to its head,
 To find where this sweet nymph prepared her
 secret bed: ³⁰
 In vain; the sweet nymph might nowhere be
 found,
 And so he rested, on the lonely ground,
 Pensive, and full of painful jealousies
 Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.
 There as he stood, he heard a mournful
 voice, ³⁵
 Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys
 All pain but pity: thus the lone voice spake:
 "When from this wreathed tomb shall I
 awake!
 When move in a sweet body fit for life,
 And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy
 strife ⁴⁰
 Of hearts and lips! Ah, miserable me!"
 The God, dove-footed, glided silently
 Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his
 speed,
 The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,
 Until he found a palpitating snake, ⁴⁵
 Bright, and cirque-couchant² in a dusky
 brake.

She was a gordian² shape of dazzling hue,
 Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;
 Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,
 Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barred;
 And full of silver moons, that, as she
 breathed, ⁵¹
 Dissolved, or brighter shone, or inter-
 wreathed

¹ coiled.² like the Gordian Knot.

Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries —
 So rainbow-sided, touched with miseries,
 She seemed, at once, some penanced lady
 elf, ⁵⁵
 Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.
 Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire
 Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar:¹
 Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!
 She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls
 complete: ⁶⁰
 And for her eyes: what could such eyes do
 there
 But weep, and weep, that they were born so
 fair?
 As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.
 Her throat was serpent, but the words she
 spake
 Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's
 sake, ⁶⁵
 And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,
 Like a stooped falcon ere he takes his prey.

"Fair Hermes, crowned with feathers,
 fluttering light,
 I had a splendid dream of thee last night:
 I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold, ⁷⁰
 Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,
 The only sad one; for thou didst not hear
 The soft, lute-fingered Muses chaunting clear,
 Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,
 Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long
 melodious moan. ⁷⁵
 I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,
 Break amorous through the clouds, as morn-
 ing breaks,
 And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean² dart,
 Strike for the Cretan isle; and here thou art!
 Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the
 maid?" ⁸⁰
 Whereat the star of Lethe³ not delayed
 His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired:
 "Thou smooth-lipped serpent, surely high
 inspired!
 Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy
 eyes,
 Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise, ⁸⁵
 Telling me only where my nymph is fled, —
 Where she doth breathe!" "Bright planet,
 thou hast said,"
 Returned the snake, "but seal with oaths,
 fair God!"
 "I swear," said Hermes, "by my serpent rod,
 And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown!"
 Light flew his earnest words, among the
 blossoms blown. ⁹¹

¹ The tiara of the seven stars, which later became a constellation, given to Ariadne by Bacchus.² Of Apollo.³ i.e. Hermes, who guided souls to Hades.

Then thus again the brilliance feminine:

"Too frail of heart! for this lost nymph of
thine,

Free as the air, invisibly, she strays

About these thornless wilds; her pleasant
days 95

She tastes unseen; unseen her nimble feet

Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet;

From weary tendrils, and bowed branches
green,

She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes un-
seen:

And by my power is her beauty veiled 100

To keep it unaffronted, unassailed

By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,

Of Satyrs, Fauns, and bleared Silenus' sighs.

Pale grew her immortality, for woe

Of all these lovers, and she grieved so 105

I took compassion on her, bade her steep

Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep

Her loveliness invisible, yet free

To wander as she loves, in liberty.

Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou
alone, 110

If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my
boon!"

Then, once again, the charmed God began

An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran

Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.

Ravished, she lifted her Circean head, 115

Blushed a live damask, and swift-lipsing
said,

"I was a woman, let me have once more

A woman's shape, and charming as before.

I love a youth of Corinth — O the bliss!

Give me my woman's form, and place me
where he is. 120

Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy
brow,

And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even
now."

The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,

She breathed upon his eyes, and swift was
seen

Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on
the green. 125

It was no dream; or say a dream it was,

Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly
pass

Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.

One warm, flushed moment, hovering, it
might seem

Dashed by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he
burned; 130

Then, lighting on the printless verdure,
turned

To the swooned serpent, and with languid
arm,

Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean¹
charm.

So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent

Full of adoring tears and blandishment, 135

And towards her step: she, like a moon in
wane,

Faded before him, cowered, nor could re-
strain

Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower

That faints into itself at evening hour:

But the God fostering her chilled hand, 140

She felt the warmth, her eyelids opened
bland,

And, like new flowers at morning song of
bees,

Bloomed, and gave up her honey to the lees.

Into the green-recessed woods they flew;

Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do. 145

Left to herself, the serpent now began

To change; her elfin blood in madness ran,

Her mouth foamed, and the grass, therewith
besprent,²

Withered at dew so sweet and virulent;

Her eyes in torture fixed, and anguish
drear, 150

Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all
sear,

Flashed phosphor and sharp sparks, without
one cooling tear.

The colors all inflamed throughout her train,

She writhed about, convulsed with scarlet
pain:

A deep volcanic yellow took the place 155

Of all her milder-mooned body's grace;

And, as the lava ravishes the mead,

Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede;

Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and
bars,

Eclipsed her crescents, and licked up her
stars: 160

So that, in moments few, she was undrest

Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,

And rubious-argent: of all these bereft,

Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.

Still shone her crown; that vanished, also
she 165

Melted and disappeared as suddenly;

And in the air, her new voice luting soft,

Cried, "Lycius! gentle Lycius!" — Borne
aloft

With the bright mists about the mountains
hoar

These words dissolved: Crete's forests heard
no more. 170

¹ The staff or wand of Hermes (Mercury) was called a caduceus. "Lithe" suggests the snakes that entwined the staff.

² sprinkled.

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,
 A full-born beauty new and exquisite?
 She fled into that valley they pass o'er
 Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas shore;
 And rested at the foot of those wild hills, 175
 The rugged founts of the Peræan rills,
 And of that other ridge whose barren back
 Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,
 South-westward to Cleone. There she stood
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood, 180
 Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,
 By a clear pool, wherein she passioned
 To see herself escaped from so sore ills,
 While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius! — for she was a maid
 More beautiful than ever twisted braid, 186
 Or sighed, or blushed, or on spring-flowered
 lea

Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:
 A virgin purest lipped, yet in the lore
 Of love deep learned to the red heart's core:
 Not one hour old, yet of scintial brain 191
 To unperplex bliss from its neighbor pain;
 Define their pettish limits, and estrange
 Their points of contact, and swift counter-
 change;

Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dis-
 part 195

Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art;
 As though in Cupid's college she had spent
 Sweet days a lovely graduate, still un-
 shent,¹

And kept his rosy terms in idle languish-
 ment.

Why this fair creature chose so faerily 200
 By the wayside to linger, we shall see;
 But first 'tis to tell how she could muse
 And dream, when in the serpent prison-
 house,

Of all she list, strange or magnificent:
 How, ever, where she willed, her spirit
 went; 205

Whether to faint Elysium, or where
 Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids
 fair

Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly
 stair;

Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,
 Stretched out, at ease, beneath a glutinous
 pine; 210

Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine²
 Mulciber's³ columns gleam in far piazzian
 line.

And sometimes into cities she would send
 Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend;

1 blameless.

2 palatial.

3 Vulcan's.

And once, while among mortals dreaming
 thus, 215

She saw the young Corinthian Lycius
 Charioting foremost in the envious race,
 Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,
 And fell into a swooning love of him.

Now on the moth-time of that evening
 dim 220

He would return that way, as well she knew,
 To Corinth from the shore; for freshly blew
 The eastern soft wind, and his galley now
 Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow
 In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle 225
 Fresh anchored; whither he had been awhile
 To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there
 Waits with high marble doors for blood and
 incense rare.

Jove heard his vows, and bettered his desire;
 For by some freakful chance he made retire
 From his companions, and set forth to
 walk, 231

Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk:
 Over the solitary hills he fared,
 Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star ap-
 peared

His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,
 In the calmed twilight of Platonic shades. 236

Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near —
 Close to her passing, in indifference drear,
 Her silent sandals swept the mossy green;
 So neighbored to him, and yet so unseen 240
 She stood: he passed, shut up in mysteries,
 His mind wrapped like his mantle, while her
 eyes

Followed his steps, and her neck regal white
 Turned — syllabing thus, "Ah, Lycius
 bright,

And will you leave me on the hills alone? 245
 Lycius, look back! and be some pity shown."

He did; not with cold wonder fearfully,
 But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice;

For so delicious were the words she sung,
 It seemed he had loved them a whole summer
 long; 250

And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,
 Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,

And still the cup was full, — while he, afraid
 Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid

Due adoration, thus began to adore; 255
 Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain
 so sure:

"Leave thee alone! Look back! Ah, God-
 dess, see

Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee!
 For pity do not this sad heart belie —

Even as thou vanishest so shall I die. 260
 Stay! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay!

To thy far wishes will thy streams obey:

Stay! though the greenest woods be thy domain,

Alone they can drink up the morning rain:
Though a descended Pleiad, will not one 265
Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune
Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine?
So sweetly to these ravished ears of mine
Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou
shouldst fade

Thy memory will waste me to a shade: — 270
For pity do not melt!" — "If I should stay,"
Said Lamia, "here, upon this floor of clay,
And pain my steps upon these flowers too
rough,

What canst thou say or do of charm enough
To dull the nice remembrance of my home?
Thou canst not ask me with thee here to
roam 276

Over these hills and vales, where no joy is, —
Empty of immortality and bliss!
Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know
That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280
In human climes, and live: Alas! poor youth,
What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe
My essence? What serener palaces,
Where I may all my many senses please,
And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts
appease? 285

It cannot be — Adieu!" So said, she rose
Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to
lose

The amorous promise of her lone complain,
Swooned, murmuring of love, and pale with
pain.

The cruel lady, without any show 290
Of sorrow for her tender favorite's woe,
But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,
With brighter eyes and slow amenity,
Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh
The life she had so tangled in her mesh: 295
And as he from one trance was waking
Into another, she began to sing,
Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every
thing,

A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,
While, like held breath, the stars drew in their
panting fires. 300

And then she whispered in such trembling
tone,

As those who, safe together met alone
For the first time through many anguished
days,

Use other speech than looks; bidding him
raise

His drooping head, and clear his soul of
doubt, 305

For that she was a woman, and without
Any more subtle fluid in her veins

Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same
pains

Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.
And next she wondered how his eyes could
miss 310

Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,
She dwelt but half retired, and there had led
Days happy as the gold coin could invent
Without the aid of love; yet in content
Till she saw him, as once she passed him
by, 315

Where 'gainst a column he lent thoughtfully
At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heaped
Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reaped
Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before
The Adonian feast¹; whereof she saw no
more, 320

But wept alone those days, for why should
she adore?

Lycius from death awoke into amaze,
To see her still, and singing so sweet lays;
Then from amaze into delight he fell
To hear her whisper woman's lore so well; 325
And every word she spake enticed him on
To unperplexed delight and pleasure known.
Let the mad poets say what'er they please
Of the sweets of Faeries, Peris, Goddesses,
There is not such a treat among them all, 330
Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,
As a real woman, lineal indeed
From Pyrrha's² pebbles or old Adam's seed.
Thus gentle Lamia judged, and judged aright,
That Lycius could not love in half a fright,
So threw the goddess off, and won his
heart 336

More pleasantly by playing woman's part,
With no more awe than what her beauty
gave,

That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.
Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340
Marrying to every word a twinborn sigh;
And last, pointing to Corinth, asked her
sweet,

If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.
The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness
Made, by a spell, the triple league de-
crease 345

To a few paces; not at all surmised
By blinded Lycius, so in her comprised.
They passed the city gates, he knew not how,
So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350
Throughout her palaces imperial,

¹ In honor of Adonis, the beautiful boy beloved of Venus.

² According to legend, Pyrrha and her husband Deucalion, after the flood, scattered pebbles, from which the new race of man grew.

And all her populous streets and temples
 lewd,
 Muttered, like tempest in the distance
 brewed,
 To the wide-spread night above her towers.
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool
 hours, 355
 Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement
 white,
 Companioned or alone; while many a light
 Flared, here and there, from wealthy festi-
 vals,
 And threw their moving shadows on the
 walls,
 Or found them clustered in the corniced
 shade 360
 Of some arched temple door, or dusky colon-
 nade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in
 fear,
 Her fingers he pressed hard, as one came near
 With curled gray beard, sharp eyes, and
 smooth bald crown,
 Slow-stepped, and robed in philosophic
 gown: 365
 Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,
 Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,
 While hurried Lamia trembled: "Ah," said
 he,
 "Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?
 Why does your tender palm dissolve in
 dew?" — 370
 "I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me
 who
 Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind
 His features: — Lycius! wherefore did you
 blind
 Yourself from his quick eyes?" Lycius
 replied,
 "'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide 375
 And good instructor; but to-night he seems
 The ghost of folly haunting my sweet
 dreams."

While yet he spake they had arrived before
 A pillared porch, with lofty portal door,
 Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor
 glow 380
 Reflected in the slabbed steps below,
 Mild as a star in water; for so new,
 And so unsullied was the marble's hue,
 So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,
 Ran the dark veins, that none but feet
 divine 385
 Could e'er have touched there. Sounds
 Æolian¹

¹ As from an Æolian harp, played by the wind.

Breathed from the hinges, as the ample span
 Of the wide doors disclosed a place unknown
 Some time to any, but those two alone,
 And a few Persian mutes, who that same
 year 390
 Were seen about the markets: none knew
 where
 They could inhabit; the most curious
 Were foiled, who watched to trace them to
 their house:
 And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,
 For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,
 'Twould humor many a heart to leave them
 thus, 396
 Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

PART II

Love in a hut, with water and a crust,
 Is — Love, forgive us! — cinders, ashes,
 dust;
 Love in a palace is perhaps at last
 More grievous torment than a hermit's
 fast: —
 That is a doubtful tale from faery land, 5
 Hard for the non-elect to understand.
 Had Lycius lived to hand his story down,
 He might have given the moral a fresh
 frown,
 Or clenched it quite: but too short was their
 bliss
 To breed distrust and hate, that make the
 soft voice hiss. 10
 Beside, there, nightly, with terrific glare,
 Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,
 Hovered and buzzed his wings, with fearful
 roar,
 Above the lintel of their chamber door,
 And down the passage cast a glow upon the
 floor. 15

For all this came a ruin: side by side
 They were enthroned, in the even tide,
 Upon a couch, near to a curtaining
 Whose airy texture, from a golden string,
 Floated into the room, and let appear 20
 Unveiled the summer heaven, blue and clear,
 Betwixt two marble shafts: — there they
 reposed,
 Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids
 closed,
 Saving a tithe which love still open kept,
 That they might see each other while they
 almost slept; 25
 When from the slope side of a suburb hill,
 Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a
 thrill
 Of trumpets — Lycius started — the sounds
 fled,

But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.
For the first time, since first he harbored
in 30

That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,
His spirit passed beyond its golden bourn
Into the noisy world almost forsworn.
The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want 35
Of something more, more than her empery
Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well
That but a moment's thought is passion's
passing bell.

"Why do you sigh, fair creature?" whispered
he: 40

"Why do you think?" returned she tenderly:

"You have deserted me; — where am I now?
Not in your heart while care weighs on your
brow:

No, no, you have dismissed me; and I go
From your breast houseless: aye, it must be
so." 45

He answered, bending to her open eyes,
Where he was mirrored small in paradise,
"My silver planet, both of eve and morn!
Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,
While I am striving how to fill my heart 50
With deeper crimson, and a double smart?
How to entangle, trammel up and snare
Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there
Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose?
Aye, a sweet kiss — you see your mighty
woes. 55

My thoughts! shall I unveil them? Listen
then!

What mortal hath a prize, that other men
May be confounded and abashed withal,
But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestic,
And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice 60
Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.
Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,
While through the thronged streets your
bridal car
Wheels round its dazzling spokes." — The
lady's cheek

Trembled, she nothing said, but, pale and
meek, 65

Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain
Beseeching him, the while his hand she
wrung,

To change his purpose. He thereat was
stung,

Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70
Her wild and timid nature to his aim:
Besides, for all his love, in self despite,
Against his better self, he took delight

Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.
His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue 75
Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible
In one whose brow had no dark veins to
swell.

Fine was the mitigated fury, like
Apollo's presence when in act to strike
The serpent — Ha, the serpent! certes, she 80
Was none. She burnt, she loved the tyranny,
And, all subdued, consented to the hour
When to the bridal he should lead his para-
mour.

Whispering in midnight silence, said the
youth,

"Sure some sweet name thou hast, though,
by my truth, 85

I have not asked it, ever thinking thee
Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,
As still I do. Hast any mortal name,
Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?
Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth, 90
To share our marriage feast and nuptial
mirth?"

"I have no friends," said Lamia, "no, not
one;

My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:
My parents' bones are in their dusty urns
Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,
Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save
me, 96

And I neglect the holy rite for thee.
Even as you list invite your many guests;
But if, as now it seems, your vision rests
With any pleasure on me, do not bid 100
Old Apollonius — from him keep me hid."
Lycius, perplexed at words so blind and
blank,

Made close inquiry; from whose touch she
shrank,

Feigning a sleep; and he to the dull shade
Of deep sleep in a moment was betrayed. 105

It was the custom then to bring away
The bride from home at blushing shut of day,
Veiled, in a chariot, heralded along
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage
song,

With other pageants: but this fair un-
known 110

Had not a friend. So being left alone,
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin)
And knowing surely she could never win
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to
dress 115

The misery in fit magnificence.
She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and
whence

Came, and who were her subtle servitors.
About the halls, and to and from the doors,
There was a noise of wings, till in short
space 120

The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-
arched grace.

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone
Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan
Throughout, as fearful the whole charm
might fade.

Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade 125
Of palm and plantain,¹ met from either side,
High in the midst, in honor of the bride:

Two palms and then two plantains, and so
on,

From either side their stems branched one
to one

All down the aisled place; and beneath all 130
There ran a stream of lamps straight on from
wall to wall,

So canopied, lay an untasted feast
Teeming with odors. Lamia, regal drest,
Silently paced about, and as she went,
In pale contented sort of discontent, 135
Missioned her viewless servants to enrich
The fretted splendor of each nook and niche.
Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at
first,

Came jasper pannels; then, anon, there burst
Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees, 140
And with the larger wove in small intricacies.
Approving all, she faded at self-will,
And shut the chamber up, close, hushed and
still,

Complete and ready for the revels rude,
When dreadful guests would come to spoil
her solitude. 145

The day appeared, and all the gossip rout.
O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout
The silent-blessing fate, warm cloistered
hours,

And show to common eyes these secret
bowers?

The herd approached; each guest, with busy
brain, 150

Arriving at the portal, gazed amain,
And entered marveling: for they knew the
street,

Remembered it from childhood all complete
Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen

That royal porch, that high-built fair de-
mesne;² 155

So in they hurried all, mazed, curious and
keen:

Save one, who looked thereon with eye
severe,

And with calm-planted steps walked in
austere;

'Twas Apollonius: something too he laughed,
As though some knotty problem, that had
daft 160

His patient thought, had now begun to
thaw,

And solve and melt: — 'twas just as he fore-
saw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule
His young disciple. "Tis no common rule,
Lycius," said he, "for uninvited guest 165

To force himself upon you, and infest
With an unbidden presence the bright
throng

Of younger friends; yet must I do this
wrong,

And you forgive me." Lycius blushed, and
led

The old man through the inner doors broad-
spread; 170

With reconciling words and courteous mien
Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,
Filled with pervading brilliance and perfume:
Before each lucid pannel fuming stood 175
A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,
Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,
Whose slender feet wide-swerved upon the
soft

Wool-woven carpets: fifty wreaths of smoke
From fifty censers their light voyage took 180
To the high roof, still mimicked as they rose
Along the mirrored walls by twin-clouds
odorous.

Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats in-
sphered,

High as the level of a man's breast reared
On libbard's³ paws, upheld the heavy
gold 185

Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told
Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine
Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.
Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,
Each shrining in the midst the image of a
God. 190

When in an antechamber every guest
Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure
pressed,

By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and
feet,

And fragrant oils with ceremony meet

1 leopard's.

¹ A tropical tree, in its shape and in its fruit, something
like a banana tree.

² i.e., demain, estate.

Poured on his hair, they all moved to the
feast 195
In white robes, and themselves in order
placed
Around the silken couches, wondering
Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of
wealth could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,
While fluent Greek a voweled undersong 200
Kept up among the guests, discoursing low
At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;
But when the happy vintage touched their
brains,
Louder they talk, and louder come the strains
Of powerful instruments:— the gorgeous
dyes, 205

The space, the splendor of the draperies,
The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,
Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,
Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,
And every soul from human trammels freed,
No more so strange; for merry wine, sweet
wine, 211
Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too
divine.

Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height;
Flushed were their cheeks, and bright eyes
double bright:

Garlands of every green, and every scent 215
From vales deflowered, or forest-trees
branch-rent,

In baskets of bright osiered gold were brought
High as the handles heaped, to suit the
thought

Of every guest; that each, as he did please,
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillowed at
his ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia? What for
Lycius?

What for the sage, old Apollonius?
Upon her aching forehead be there hung
The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue;
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for
him 225

The thyrsus,* that his watching eyes may
swim

Into forgetfulness; and, for the sage,
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage
War on his temples. Do not all charms fly
At the mere touch of cold philosophy? 230

There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
We know her woof, her texture; she is given
In the dull catalogue of common things.

Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line, 235
Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine —
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made
The tender-personed Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,
Scarce saw in all the room another face, 240
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took
Full brimmed, and opposite sent forth a look
'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,
And pledge him. The bald-head philoso-
pher 245

Had fixed his eye, without a twinkle or stir
Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,
Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her
sweet pride.

Lycius then pressed her hand, with devout
touch,

As pale it lay upon the rosy couch: 250

'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins;
Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains
Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.

"Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost
thou start?

Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia
answered not. 255

He gazed into her eyes, and not a jot
Owned they the lovelorn piteous appeal:
More, more he gazed: his human senses reel:
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs;
There was no recognition in those orbs. 260
"Lamia!" he cried — and no soft-toned
reply.

The many heard, and the loud revelry
Grew hush; the stately music no more
breathes;

The myrtle sickened in a thousand wreaths.
By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure
ceased; 265

A deadly silence step by step increased,
Until it seemed a horrid presence there,
And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.
"Lamia!" he shrieked; and nothing but the
shriek

With its sad echo did the silence break. 270
"Begone, foul dream!" he cried, gazing
again

In the bride's face, where now no azure vein
Wandered on fair-spaced temples; no soft
bloom

Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine
The deep-recessed vision: — all was blight;
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly
white. 276

"Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruth-
less man!

* A fern.

2 The wand, entwined with ivy and vine-leaves, carried
by Bacchus and his followers.

Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous
ban

Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images
Here represent their shadowy presences, 280
May pierce them on the sudden with the
thorn

Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright
Of conscience, for their long offended might,
For all thine impious proud-heart sophis-
tries, 285

Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.

Corinthians! look upon that grey-beard
wretch!

Mark how, possessed, his lashless eyelids
stretch

Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!
My sweet bride withers at their potency." 290

"Fool!" said the sophist, in an under-tone
Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing
moan

From Lycius answered, as heart-struck and
lost,

He sank supine beside the aching ghost.
"Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes
still 295

Relented not, nor moved; "from every ill
Of life have I preserved thee to this day,
And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?"
Then Lamia breathed death breath; the
sophist's eye,

Like a sharp spear, went through her ut-
terly, 300

Keen, cruel, perçant, stinging: she, as well
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,
Motioned him to be silent; vainly so,
He looked and looked again a level — No!
"A serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said, 305

Than with a frightful scream she vanished:
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,
As were his limbs of life, from that same
night.

On the high couch he lay! — his friends came
round —

Supported him — no pulse, or breath they
found, 310

And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body
wound.

July–September, 1819.

SONNET

This sonnet, probably the next to the last
poem that Keats wrote, was composed aboard
the boat carrying him to Italy, after the ship
had stopped for a short time on the coast of
Dorsetshire.

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou
art —

Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,

Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task s
Of pure ablution round earth's human
shores,

Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the
moors —

No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening
breast, 320

To feel forever its soft fall and swell,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever — or else swoon to death.

September, 1820.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775–1864)

Walter Savage Landor, the son of a prominent physician, was born at Warwick in 1775. He was educated at Rugby and at Trinity College, Cambridge. He early declared himself a poet, and throughout a long life gave himself to the pursuit of letters. In 1805 his father's death put him in control of a large fortune. After a romantic expedition to Spain to assist the Spaniards in their revolt against Napoleon, Landor married and settled first at Bath, then at Llanthony in Wales. He was constantly in dispute with his neighbors, and later with his own family, for though generous and magnanimous he was hot in temper and poor in judgment. In 1814 he went to France and then to Italy where he lived until 1835, chiefly at Florence. He died in 1864.

Landor's first important poem, *Gebir*, a tale of the Moslem invasion of Spain and the hero who gave his name to Gibraltar, appeared in 1798. This poem is a sign of the romantic spirit scarcely less impressive than the Lyrical Ballads, published the same year. Landor, however, united a romantic temperament with an absorbing interest in classical life and a style of classical distinction. He wrote much in Latin, and translated *Gebir* into that tongue. He wrote a series of dramas in blank verse, on subjects drawn from Neapolitan history and much other poetry on classical themes — the *Hellenics* and *Heroic Idyls*. His best known poetry is in the form of quatrains, distinguished for their extreme compression and precision of utterance. Landor's prose, like his

poetry, is profoundly influenced by his love of the Greek and Roman classics. He used the classical form of the dialogue in the series of *Imaginary Conversations* which appeared in successive volumes between 1824 and 1846. These present famous and significant figures of history in circumstances which reveal their characters, sometimes with tragic intensity. Of this semi-dramatic form Landor was a master. *Pericles and Aspasia* (1836) is an adaptation of it, the story of the famous Athenian lovers being told in letters.

Landor's works were collected in 1846 with a biography by John Forster. A later edition by C. G. Crump appeared in 1893. A volume of selections in the Golden Treasury Series was made by Sidney Colvin, who also contributed the life of Landor in the English Men of Letters Series. J. R. Lowell's essay on Landor is the leading American appreciation. The character of Boythorn, in Dickens's *Bleak House*, is drawn with much exaggeration from Landor.

ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
 Ah, what the form divine!
 What every virtue, every grace!
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
 Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes 5
 May weep, but never see,
 A night of memories and of sighs
 I consecrate to thee.

A FIESOLAN IDYL

Here, where precipitate Spring with one
 light bound
 Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires,
 And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,
 Soft airs that want the lute to play with 'em,
 And softer sighs that know not what they 5
 want,
 Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,
 Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier
 ones
 Of sights in Fiesole right above,
 While I was gazing a few paces off
 At what they seemed to show me with their
 nods, 10
 Their frequent whispers and their pointing
 shoots,
 A gentle maid came down the garden-steps
 And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.
 I heard the branches rustle, and stept forth
 To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat, —
 Such I believed it must be. How could I
 Let beast o'erpower them? when hath wind
 or rain 17
 Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted me,
 And I (however they might bluster round)
 Walkt off? 'Twere most ungrateful; for
 sweet scents 20
 Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter
 thoughts,
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory
 That would let drop without them her best
 stores.
 They bring me tales of youth and tones of love,
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way 25

To let all flowers live freely, and all die
 (Whene'er their Genius bids their souls
 depart)

Among their kindred in their native place.
 I never pluck the rose; the violet's head 29
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
 And not reproacht me; the ever-sacred cup
 Of the pure lily hath between my hands
 Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.
 I saw the light that made the glossy leaves
 More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit; 36
 I saw the foot that, although half-erect
 From its gray slipper, could not lift her up
 To what she wanted. I held down a branch
 And gathered her some blossoms, since their
 hour 40

Was come, and bees had wounded them, and
 flies

Of harder wing were working their way
 through

And scattering them in fragments under foot.
 So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved;
 Others, ere broken off, fell into shells, 45
 Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,
 And like snow not seen through, by eye or
 sun;

Yet every one her gown received from me
 Was fairer than the first. I thought not so,
 But so she praised them to reward my care.
 I said, "You find the largest." "This in-
 deed," 51

Cried she, "is large and sweet." She held
 one forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take
 She knew not, nor did I; but taking it
 Would best have solved (and this she felt)
 her doubt. 55

I dared not touch it; for it seemed a part
 Of her own self; fresh, full, the most mature
 Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch
 To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back
 The boon she tendered, and then, finding
 not 60

The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,
 Dropt it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

1831; pub. 1846.

ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

I strove with none, for none was worth my
strife,

Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

1824-1846

MARCELLUS AND HANNIBAL

Marcellus commanded the Roman army in
the Second Punic War after the defeat of
Cannæ. He was killed in a skirmish at
Venusia, 208 B.C.

Hannibal. Could a Numidian horseman
ride no faster? Marcellus! ho! Marcellus!
He moves not — he is dead. Did he not stir
his fingers? Stand wide, soldiers — wide,
forty paces — give him air — bring water —
halt! Gather those broad leaves, and all the
rest, growing under the brushwood — un-
brace his armor. Loose the helmet first —
his breast rises. I fancied his eyes were fixed
on me — they have rolled back again. Who
presumed to touch my shoulder? This horse?
It was surely the horse of Marcellus! Let no
man mount him. Ha! ha! the Romans, too,
sink into luxury: here is gold about the charger.

Gaulish Chieftain. Execrable thief! The
golden chain of our king under a beast's
grinders! The vengeance of the gods hath
overtaken the impure —

Hannibal. We will talk about vengeance
when we have entered Rome, and about purity
among the priests, if they will hear us. Sound
for the surgeon. That arrow may be ex-
tracted from the side, deep as it is. — The
conqueror of Syracuse lies before me. — Send
a vessel off to Carthage. Say Hannibal is at
the gates of Rome. — Marcellus, who stood
alone between us, fallen. Brave man! I
would rejoice and cannot. — How awfully
serene a countenance! Such as we hear are
in the islands of the Blessed. And how
glorious a form and stature! Such too was
theirs! They also once lay thus upon the
earth wet with their blood — few other enter
there. And what plain armor!

Gaulish Chieftain. My party slew him —
indeed I think I slew him myself. I claim the
chain: it belongs to my king; the glory of Gaul
requires it. Never will she endure to see an-
other take it.

Hannibal. My friend, the glory of Marcel-

lus did not require him to wear it. When he
suspended the arms of your brave king in the
temple, he thought such a trinket unworthy
of himself and of Jupiter. The shield he
battered down, the breast-plate he pierced
with his sword — these he showed to the
people and to the gods; hardly his wife and
little children saw this, ere his horse wore it.

Gaulish Chieftain. Hear me, O Hannibal!

Hannibal. What! when Marcellus lies be-
fore me? when his life may perhaps be re-
called? when I may lead him in triumph to
Carthage? when Italy, Sicily, Greece, Asia,
wait to obey me? Content thee! I will give
thee mine own bridle, worth ten such.

Gaulish Chieftain. For myself?

Hannibal. For thyself.

Gaulish Chieftain. And these rubies and
emeralds, and that scarlet —

Hannibal. Yes, yes.

Gaulish Chieftain. O glorious Hannibal!
unconquerable hero! O my happy country!
to have such an ally and defender. I swear
eternal gratitude — yes, gratitude, love, de-
votion, beyond eternity.

Hannibal. In all treaties we fix the time:
I could hardly ask a longer. Go back to thy
station. — I would see what the surgeon is
about, and hear what he thinks. The life of
Marcellus! the triumph of Hannibal! what
else has the world in it? Only Rome and Car-
thage: these follow.

Marcellus. I must die then? The gods be
praised! The commander of a Roman army
is no captive.

Hannibal (to the Surgeon). Could not he
bear a sea-voyage? Extract the arrow.

Surgeon. He expires that moment.

Marcellus. It pains me: extract it.

Hannibal. Marcellus, I see no expression
of pain on your countenance, and never will I
consent to hasten the death of an enemy in
my power. Since your recovery is hopeless,
you say truly you are no captive.

(To the Surgeon.) Is there nothing, man,
that can assuage the mortal pain? for, suppress
the signs of it as he may, he must feel it. Is
there nothing to alleviate and allay it?

Marcellus. Hannibal, give me thy hand —
thou hast found it and brought it me, com-
passion.

(To the Surgeon.) Go, friend; others want
thy aid; several fell around me.

Hannibal. Recommend to your country,
O Marcellus, while time permits it, reconcilia-
tion and peace with me, informing the Senate
of my superiority in force, and the impos-
sibility of resistance. The tablet is ready: let

me take off this ring — try to write, to sign it, at least. Oh, what satisfaction I feel at seeing you able to rest upon the elbow, and even to smile!

Marcellus. Within an hour or less, with how severe a brow would Mínos say to me, "Marcellus, is this thy writing?"

Rome loses one man: she hath lost many such, and she still hath many left.

Hannibal. Afraid as you are of falsehood, say you this? I confess in shame the ferocity of my countrymen. Unfortunately, too, the nearer posts are occupied by Gauls, infinitely more cruel. The Numidians are so in revenge: the Gauls both in revenge and in sport. My presence is required at a distance, and I apprehend the barbarity of one or other, learning, as they must do, your refusal to execute my wishes for the common good, and feeling that by this refusal you deprive them of their country, after so long an absence.

Marcellus. Hannibal, thou art not dying.

Hannibal. What then? What mean you?

Marcellus. That thou mayest, and very justly, have many things yet to apprehend: I can have none. The barbarity of thy soldiers is nothing to me: mine would not dare be cruel. Hannibal is forced to be absent; and his authority goes away with his horse. On this turf lies defaced the semblance of a general; but Marcellus is yet the regulator of his army. Dost thou abdicate a power conferred on thee by thy nation? Or wouldst thou acknowledge it to have become, by thy own sole fault, less plenary than thy adversary's?

I have spoken too much: let me rest; this mantle oppresses me.

Hannibal. I placed my mantle on your head when the helmet was first removed, and while you were lying in the sun. Let me fold it under, and then replace the ring.

Marcellus. Take it, Hannibal. It was given me by a poor woman who flew to me at Syracuse, and who covered it with her hair, torn off in desperation that she had no other gift to offer. Little thought I that her gift and her words should be mine. How suddenly may the most powerful be in the situation of the most helpless! Let that ring and the mantle under my head be the exchange of guests at parting. The time may come, Hannibal, when thou (and the gods alone know whether as conqueror or conquered) mayest sit under the roof of my children, and in either case it shall serve thee. In thy adverse fortune, they will remember on whose pillow their father breathed his last; in thy prosperous (Heaven grant it may shine upon

thee in some other country!) it will rejoice thee to protect them. We feel ourselves the most exempt from affliction when we relieve it, although we are then the most conscious that it may befall us.

There is one thing here which is not at the disposal of either.

Hannibal. What?

Marcellus. This body.

Hannibal. Whither would you be lifted? Men are ready.

Marcellus. I meant not so. My strength is failing. I seem to hear rather what is within than what is without. My sight and my other senses are in confusion. I would have said — This body, when a few bubbles of air shall have left it, is no more worthy of thy notice than of mine; but thy glory will not let thee refuse it to the piety of my family.

Hannibal. You would ask something else. I perceive an inquietude not visible till now.

Marcellus. Duty and Death make us think of home sometimes.

Hannibal. Thitherward the thoughts of the conqueror and of the conquered fly together.

Marcellus. Hast thou any prisoners from my escort?

Hannibal. A few dying lie about — and let them lie — they are Tuscans. The remainder I saw at a distance, flying, and but one brave man among them — he appeared a Roman — a youth who turned back, though wounded. They surrounded and dragged him away, spurring his horse with their swords. These Etrurians measure their courage carefully, and tack it well together before they put it on, but throw it off again with lordly ease.

Marcellus, why think about them? or does aught else disquiet your thoughts?

Marcellus. I have suppressed it long enough. My son — my beloved son!

Hannibal. Where is he? Can it be? Was he with you?

Marcellus. He would have shared my fate — and has not. Gods of my country! beneficent throughout life to me, in death surprisingly beneficent: I render you, for the last time, thanks.

LEOFRIC AND GODIVA

Leofric, the Saxon Earl, is riding into Coventry with his young bride, Godiva. The story is a famous one, told among others by Tennyson. The date is before the Norman Conquest.

Godiva. There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep

pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor, pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they, and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness, or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odor.

Leofric. And now, Godiva, my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

Godiva. Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage. They, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.

Leofric. O light, laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

Godiva. I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish, — what he can do like God?

Leofric. How! what is it?

Godiva. I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving Lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

Leofric. Unhappy! is that all?

Godiva. Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! — Shall none enjoy

them; not even we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set: let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words: they are better than mine. Should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

Leofric. Godiva, would'st thou plead to me for rebels?

Godiva. They have, then, drawn the sword against you? Indeed, I knew it not.

Leofric. They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

Godiva. If they were starving, as they said they were —

Leofric. Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

Godiva. Enough! O God! too much! too much! May you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst; and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul, for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family!

Leofric. We must hold solemn festivals.

Godiva. We must, indeed.

Leofric. Well, then?

Godiva. Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? — are maddening songs, and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-colored coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden, and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows

from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again to him who pours it out here abundantly.

Leofric. Thou art wild.

Godiva. I have, indeed, lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

Leofric. We may think upon it.

Godiva. O never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

Leofric. Here comes the Bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. *Godiva!* my honor and rank among men are humbled by this. Earl Godwin will hear of it. Up! up! the Bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward. Dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

Godiva. Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this most impious, task — this tax on hard labor, on hard life.

Leofric. Turn round: look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages. — Up! up! for shame! They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir Bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

Godiva. My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city?

Leofric. Sir Bishop! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon? Yea, *Godiva*, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets!

Godiva. O my dear, cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me? It was not so: can mine have hardened it?

Bishop. Earl, thou abashest thy spouse; she turneth pale, and weepeth. Lady *Godiva*, peace be with thee.

Godiva. Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my Lord's cruel word?

Bishop. I did, lady.

Godiva. Will you remember it, and pray against it.

Bishop. Wilt thou forget it, daughter?

Godiva. I am not offended.

Bishop. Angel of peace and purity!

Godiva. But treasure it up in your heart: deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And, now, what was it?

Bishop. Christ save us! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

Godiva. Did he swear an oath?

Bishop. He sware by the holy rood.

Godiva. My Redeemer, thou hast heard it! save the city!

Leofric. We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs. Let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward; to-morrow we shall rest.

Godiva. No judgments, then, to-morrow, Leofric?

Leofric. None: we will carouse.

Godiva. The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence; my prayers are heard; the heart of my beloved is now softened.

Leofric. Ay, ay.

Godiva. Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

Leofric. I have sworn. Beside, thou hast made me redder and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it: this adds to the city's crime.

Godiva. I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

Leofric. But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing: there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair. Take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it mingled now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown of wonderment. — I will say it — now, then, for worse — I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and living eyes, before the people.

Godiva. To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

Leofric. I do not hear thee; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

Godiva (to herself). God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about

me so to-morrow. O-Leofric! could my name be forgotten, and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach; and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me? Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah! when will the morning come? Ah! when will the noon be over?

The story of Godiva, at one of whose festivals or fairs I was present in my boyhood, has always much interested me; and I wrote a poem on it, sitting, I remember, by the square pool at Rugby. When I showed it to the friend in whom I had most confidence, he began to scoff at the subject; and, on his reaching the last line, his laughter was loud and immoderate. This conversation has brought both laughter and stanza back to me, and the earnestness with which I entreated and implored my friend *not to tell the lads*, so heart-strickenly and desperately was I ashamed. The verses are these, if any one else should wish another laugh at me:

In every hour, in every mood,
O lady, it is sweet and good
To bathe the soul in prayer;
And, at the close of such a day,
When we have ceased to bless and pray,
To dream on thy long hair.

May the peppermint be still growing on the bank in that place! (Landon's note.)

HENRY VIII. AND ANNE BOLEYN

This conversation is supposed to take place in 1537 after the condemnation of the Queen.

Henry. Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? 'S blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why, verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whye faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. (*Sprinkling water over her.*) Hast had water enough upon thee? Take that, then: art thyself again?

Anne. Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth? Do I behold my beloved lord — in peace — and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss? It was his voice. I cannot see him: why cannot I? Oh why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed?

Henry. Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that. Nanny, thou art a sweet slut. Thou groanest, wench: art in labor? Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

Anne. God preserve your Highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence. My eyes were heavy; I fell asleep while I was reading. I did not know of your presence at first; and, when I did, I could not speak. I

strove for utterance: I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

Henry. My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt then lie! Thou wert reading, and aloud too, with thy saintly cup of water by thee, and — what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

Anne. I had no other fruit to offer your Highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these: may I present them, such as they are? We shall have fresh next month.

Henry. Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

Anne. Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried. I am weak, and liable to swoons.

Henry. Thou hast, however, thy bridal cheeks, with lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips resisting all impression; but, now thou talkest about miscarriage, who is the father of that boy?

Anne. The Father is yours and mine — He who hath taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

Henry. Pagan, or worse, to talk so! He did not come into the world alive: there was no baptism.

Anne. I thought only of our loss: my senses are confounded. I did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly; for I often fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

Henry. No subterfuges and escapes. I warrant, thou canst not say whether at my entrance thou wert waking or wandering.

Anne. Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

Henry. Well, since thou really and truly sleepdest, what didst dream of?

Anne. I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

Henry. Ha! false one — never two sentences of truth together! But come, what didst think about, asleep or awake?

Anne. I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto him.

Henry. And nothing more?

Anne. That my prayers had been heard and my wishes were accomplishing: the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

Henry. Vexatious little devil! She says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness. Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery?

Anne. If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon; but, if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

Henry. Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton; hast thou not?

Anne. He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your Highness.

Henry. And Brereton and Norris — what have they taught thee?

Anne. They are your servants, and trusty ones.

Henry. Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee?

Anne. Yes; and —

Henry. What didst thou?

Anne. I defied him.

Henry. Is that all?

Anne. I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then, indeed, I should have incurred more justly the reproaches of your Highness: I should have sinned.

Henry. We have proofs abundant: the fellows shall one and all confront thee. — Ay, clap thy hands and kiss thy sleeve, harlot!

Anne. Oh that so great a favor is vouchsafed me! My honor is secure; my husband will be happy again; he will see my innocence.

Henry. Give me now an account of the moneys thou hast received from me within these nine months. I want them not back: they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds in that period, without even thy asking; what hast done with it, wanton?

Anne. I have regularly placed it out to interest.

Henry. Where? I demand of thee.

Anne. Among the needy and ailing. My Lord Archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly. I also had a copy myself; those who took away my papers may easily find it, for there are few others, and they lie open.

Henry. Think on my munificence to thee; recollect who made thee. Dost sigh for what thou hast lost?

Anne. I do, indeed.

Henry. I never thought thee ambitious; but thy vices creep out one by one.

Anne. I do not regret that I have been a queen and am no longer one; nor that my in-

nocence is called in question by those who never knew me; but I lament that the good people who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation check them when they speak about me; and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion is my accuser.

Henry. Wast thou conning over something in that dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

Anne. This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely in so many hundred years there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness — not, perchance, doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever honored and served faithfully; that, indeed, I did not look for nor think of; but my heart was bounding for any one I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone; but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband! it is so heavenly a thing —

Henry. To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

Anne. I said not so; but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, show us at least the semblances of weeping; and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, nor of the waters and skies around it, without a reference and a similitude to our joys or sorrows.

Henry. I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it something of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain; it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and frenzy strike out many things which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never read any thing but Bible and history — the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behooves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink — of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt — greatly more doth it behoove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will; we

must take care that the movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

Anne. O my dear husband! it must be a naughty thing, indeed, that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive any one? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

Henry. Resemble God perfectly and easily! 10 Do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

Anne. No, Henry, when his creatures talk thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good, they love him; and, when they love him, they are good 15 themselves. O Henry! my husband and King! the judgments of our Heavenly Father are righteous; on this, surely, we must think alike.

Henry. And what, then? Speak out; again I command thee, speak plainly! thy tongue 20 was not so torpid but this moment. Art ready? Must I wait?

Anne. If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business: should it haply seem possible to you that pas- 25 sion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding — do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

Henry. What! thou wouldst fain change thy 30 quarters, ay?

Anne. My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall change them shortly, whatever your Highness may determine.

Henry. Yet thou appearest hale and resolute 35 and (they tell me) smirkest and smilest to everybody.

Anne. The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; and I have heard stories of the breeze in other climates that sets in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how re- 40 freshing. My heart, indeed, is now sustained strangely; it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur 45 and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness in those about me gives me satisfaction and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me; yet I was never an ingrate. 50 What pains have I taken to find out the village-girls who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning! How gladly would I have recompensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birthnight, which else had warmed him half the winter! But these are times past: I was not Queen of England.

Henry. Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

Anne. God be praised!

Henry. Learned saint! thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform 5 me about the graver, of them.

Anne. Which may it be, my liege?

Henry. Which may it be? Pestilence! I marvel that the walls of this tower do not crack around thee at such impiety.

Anne. I would be instructed by the wisest of theologians: such is your Highness.

Henry. Are the sins of the body, foul as they are, comparable to those of the soul?

Anne. When they are united, they must be 15 worse.

Henry. Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own breast against the sword. God hath deprived thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I must hear more: proceed, I charge thee.

Anne. An aptitude to believe one thing rather than another, from ignorance or weak- 20 ness, or from the more persuasive manner of the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from the strong impression of a particular text at a particular time, and various things beside, may influence and decide our opinion; and the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will fall gently on human fallibility.

Henry. Opinion in matters of faith! rare wisdom! rare religion! Troth, Anne! thou hast well sobered me. I came rather warmly and lovingly; but these light ringlets, by the holy 30 rood, shall not shade this shoulder much longer. Nay, do not start: I tap it for the last time, my sweetest. If the Church permitted it, thou shouldst set forth on thy long journey with the eucharist between thy teeth, how- ever loath.

Anne. Love your Elizabeth, my honored lord, and God bless you! She will soon forget to call me. Do not chide her: think how young she is.

Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it would comfort my heart, — or break it.

BOSSUET AND THE DUCHESS DE FONTANGES

This conversation is supposed to occur about 50 1680. The Duchess de Fontanges was a mistress of Louis XIV; Landor quotes a remark of the Abbé du Choisy, that she was *belle comme un ange, mais sotte comme un panier* ("beautiful as an angel, but stupid as a post" — literally, basket).

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, it is the King's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His Majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, "Angélique! do not forget to compliment Monseigneur the Bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the Dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him only that he might be of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are Duchess. Let him be your confessor, my little girl. He has fine manners."

Bossuet. I dare not presume to ask you, mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply to the condescension of our royal master.

Fontanges. Oh! yes you may! I told him I was almost sure I should be ashamed of confessing such naughty things to a person of high rank, who writes like an angel.

Bossuet. The observation was inspired, mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

Fontanges. You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you directly, if you like.

Bossuet. Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady?

Fontanges. What is that?

Bossuet. Do you hate sin?

Fontanges. Very much.

Bossuet. Are you resolved to leave it off?

Fontanges. I have left it off entirely since the King began to love me. I have never said a spiteful word of anybody since.

Bossuet. In your opinion, mademoiselle, are there no other sins than malice?

Fontanges. I never stole anything; I never committed adultery; I never coveted my neighbor's wife; I never killed any person, though several have told me they should die for me.

Bossuet. Vain, idle talk! Did you listen to it?

Fontanges. Indeed I did, with both ears; it seemed so funny.

Bossuet. You have something to answer for, then.

Fontanges. No, indeed, I have not, monseigneur. I have asked many times after them, and found they were all alive; which mortified me.

Bossuet. So, then! you would really have them die for you?

Fontanges. Oh, no, no! but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest, or told me fibs; for, if they told me fibs I would never trust them again. I do not care about them; for the King told me I was only to mind him.

Bossuet. Lowest and highest, we all owe to his Majesty our duty and submission.

Fontanges. I am sure he has mine; so you need not blame me or question me on that. At first, indeed, when he entered the folding-doors, I was in such a flurry I could hear my heart beat across the chamber; by degrees I cared little about the matter; and at last, when I grew used to it, I liked it rather than not. Now, if this is not confession, what is?

Bossuet. We must abstract the soul from every low mundane thought. Do you hate the world, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. A good deal of it; all Picardy, for example, and all Sologne; nothing is uglier, — and, oh my life! What frightful men and women!

Bossuet. I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the Devil?

Fontanges. Who does not hate the Devil? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so. — I hate you, beast! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchess de Fontanges! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself?

Fontanges. Myself! does any one hate me? Why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst thing in the world: it makes one so very ugly.

Bossuet. To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies, if we would save our souls.

Fontanges. That is hard; how can I do it? I see nothing so detestable in mine! Do you? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me; but I cannot hate myself, if I would. As God hath not hated me, why should I? Beside, it was he who made the King to love me; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while His Majesty loves me, and calls me his Angélique. They make people more civil about us; and therefore it must be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold; on the contrary, she told me what a fine color and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you rather be a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the King gave you your choice?

Bossuet. Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

Fontanges. I am in earnest, as you see.

Bossuet. Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms; you will be commended for excellences which do not belong to you; and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it, you are unhappy; if you accept it, you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

Fontanges. There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly; it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned — what was it? my intellect. He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel; worth (let me whisper it in your ear — do I lean too hard?) a thousand Montespans. But His Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable!* (what is that?) and that he adored me; holding my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

Bossuet. I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

Fontanges. You may do anything with me but convert me; you must not do that; I am Catholic born. M. de Turenne and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics; you did right there. The King told the chancellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but to get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly, — did not you? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterward in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the Litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when every one is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so; for people might think her insincere in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

Bossuet. It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

Fontanges. I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turenne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand

that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

Bossuet. To what do you refer, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. That you have overcome Quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that?

Bossuet. By the grace of God.

Fontanges. Yes, indeed; but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

Bossuet. It has appeared among us but lately.

Fontanges. Oh, dear me! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

Bossuet. Really! I never heard so.

Fontanges. I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

Bossuet. In what, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. In Quietism; that is, when I fell asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fénelon should incline to it,¹ as they say he does.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

Fontanges. Is not then M. de Fénelon thought a very pious and learned person?

Bossuet. And justly.

Fontanges. I have read a great way in a romance he has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The King says there are many such about his court; but I never saw them nor heard of them before. The Marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold; and I got through, I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto, I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays de d'Aunis*, where the King has promised him a famous *heretic-hunt*. He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature: he understands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honor of absolving you, it

¹ The opinion of Molinos on Mysticism and Quietism had begun to spread abroad: but Fénelon, who had acquired already a very high celebrity for eloquence, had not yet written on the subject. We may well suppose that Bossuet was among the earliest assailants of a system which he afterwards attacked so vehemently. The stormier superstition swept away the more vapory. (Londor's note.)

would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labors.

Fontanges. You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The King assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

Bossuet. That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven —

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I always did so — every time but once. You quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my lord, you compose such pretty funeral sermons, I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing you preach mine.

Bossuet. Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence! May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared: I am advanced in age; you are a child.

Fontanges. Oh, no! I am seventeen.

Bossuet. I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. Alas, it is so! such things have been. There is, however, no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

Fontanges. I never minded them: I like peaches better; and one a day is quite enough for me.

Bossuet. We say that our days are few; and, saying it, we say too much. Marie-Angélique, we have but one: the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it; the next moment may strike it off

from us; the next sentence I would utter may be broke and fall between us.¹ The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and color, without admirer, friend, companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges! think on this! Lady! so live as to think on it undisturbed!

Fontanges. O God! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck; take them off, and let us talk on other things. What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

Bossuet. Never mind it: leave it there; I pray you, I implore you, madame!

Fontanges. Why do you rise? Why do you run? Why not let me? I am nimbler. So your ring fell from your hand, my Lord Bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

Bossuet. Madame is too condescending; had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shriveled; the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition; a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

Fontanges. It pleases me vastly; I admire rubies. I will ask the King for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes in from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him; but that is impossible, you know; for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself; he said but yesterday, "Such a sweet creature is worth a world," and no actor on the stage was more like a king than his Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and wrinkled for so great a monarch;

¹ Though Bossuet was capable of uttering and even of feeling such a sentiment, his conduct towards Fénelon, the fairest apparition that Christianity ever presented, was ungenerous and unjust.

While the diocese of Cambray was ravaged by Louis, it was spared by Marlborough; who said to the Archbishop that, if he was sorry he had not taken Cambray, it was chiefly because he lost for a time the pleasure of visiting so great a man. Peterborough, the next of our generals in glory, paid his respects to him some years afterward. (Landor's note.)

¹ Bossuet was in his fifty-fourth year; Mlle. de Fontanges died in child-bed the year following; he survived her twenty-three. (Landor's note.)

and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him, he looks so close at things.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

Fontanges. Well, I think so too, though I did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCESS DASHKOF

Czar Peter III was assassinated on July 17, 1762. Landon notes: "It is unnecessary to inform the generality of readers that Catharine was not present at the murder of her husband . . . our business is character."

Catharine. Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes, we perish.

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes; hark! they heard me; they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed, indeed, is rather of the highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

Dashkof. I hear nothing.

Catharine. My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come. — Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There! — there again! The drops are now like lead: every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress. — How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What tramping and lapping! the creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

Dashkof. Oh, heavens!

Catharine. Are you afraid?

Dashkof. There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

Catharine. You turn pale and tremble. You should have supported me, in case I had required it.

Dashkof. I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of these miscreants make me tremble. But the husband slain by his wife! — I saw not into

my heart; I looked not into it, and it chastises me.

Catharine. Dashkof, are you then really unwell?

Dashkof. What will Russia, what will Europe, say?

Catharine. Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence; but my artillery (for now, indeed, I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

Dashkof. God grant —

Catharine. I cannot but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof! God grant, forsooth! He has granted all we wanted from him at present — the safe removal of this odious Peter.

Dashkof. Yet Peter loved *you*; and even the worst husband must leave, surely, the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort; at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovereignty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

Catharine. Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the Stoic school? Are not they, rather, the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamia¹ from Livonia or Bessarabia? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death?

Dashkof. It is not his death that shocks me.

Catharine. I understand you: beside, you said as much before.

Dashkof. I fear for your renown.

Catharine. And for your own good name — ay, Dashkof!

Dashkof. He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

Catharine. You hated him.

Dashkof. Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

Catharine. Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary; that my own life was in danger; that I fell upon my knees to soften the con-

¹ Maker of a marriage-ode.

spirators; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms; and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace.

Dashkof. Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

Catharine. She shall be both, God willing.

Dashkof. The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

Catharine. The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovereign may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine?

Dashkof. I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it, is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment; particularly, if any one in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honor, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all: that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

Catharine. True; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we cannot have power; but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

Dashkof. Truly, then, may I congratulate you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

Catharine. I know and feel it.

Dashkof. I wish you always may.

Catharine. I doubt not the stability of power: I can make constant both fortune and love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit: she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend, even the autocracy.

Dashkof. Indeed I do, and most heartily.

Catharine. How!

Dashkof. I know very well what those intended who first composed the word; but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself — of all

power the most enviable; and the least consistent with power over others.

I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council-board inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

Catharine. The members of the council-board did not sit *at* it, but *upon* it, and their tactics were performed crosslegged. What partisans are to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon?

Dashkof. Peter was not insensible to glory; few men are: but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardor to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated; but it is beyond the power of fortune, or even of genius, to exalt us above the dust.

Catharine. Dashkof, you are a sensible, sweet creature; but rather too romantic on principle, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat*. Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it one in another; in women it renders them what they would fain call scornful (vain assumption of high prerogative!), and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation, which I know is dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuff-box each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a toothpick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis; a watch-chain, Venus; a ring, Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

Dashkof. He was Frederick's.

Catharine. I shall be the *Pucelle* [†] of Russia. No! I had forgotten; he has treated her scandalously.

Dashkof. Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation; who crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV, and that worse monster, the king his predecessor? He reviled, with every indignity and indecency, the woman who rescued France, and who alone, of all that ever led the armies of that kingdom, made

[†] Voltaire had written the Epic of *La Pucelle* (the Maid of Orleans).

its conquerors — the English — tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and cackling at one breath defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural: the English recruits deserted; they would not fight against God.

Catharine. Fools and bigots!

Dashkof. The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The Maid of Orleans was pious and sincere: her life asserted it; her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr, the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and savior of her country.

Catharine. Be it so; but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent, troublesome qualms.

Dashkof. If Deism had been prevalent in Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity; and if the French had been Protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up no one: for he gives no one hope. He may amuse: dullness itself must be amused, indeed, by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

Catharine. While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble. This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

Dashkof. Alas! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

Catharine. I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney.¹ I detest him as much as you do; but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly? You really, then, fancy that people care for truth! Innocent Dashkof! Believe me, there is nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it? Or, rather, can you mention to me any one who has not been in raptures when he could communicate such glad tidings? The goutiest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him. Men in general are so weak in truth that they are obliged to put

their bravery under it to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on their courage, when the bravest of them is by many degrees less courageous than a mastiff-bitch in the straw? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof; do not begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas! I cannot always be so. Heigho! But serfs and preferment will do; none shall refuse me at ninety — Paphos or Tobolsk.²

Have not you a song for me?

Dashkof. German or Russian?

Catharine. Neither, neither. Some frightful word might drop — might remind me — no, nothing shall remind me. French, rather: French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

Dashkof. It is rather in streaks and mottles; excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

Catharine. I am heated and thirsty: I cannot imagine how. I think we have not yet taken our coffee. Was it so strong? What am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then*; and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember, too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet; and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet! — how stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth: I am courageous, but I am full of weaknesses. I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and — to a friend I may say it — the most amiable part of women. Ho, ho! at last you smile: now your thoughts upon that.

Dashkof. I have heard fifty men swear it.

Catharine. They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talk-

¹ Voltaire's place of residence.

² They may choose the home of Venus or exile in Siberia.

ing of the sad necessity. — Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little *protégé*, who shall attempt to rescue him. I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are given that Ivan be despatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle; in short, at the fire of

the sentry. But not now, — another time: two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing: do not make me wait, my dearest creature! Now cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Give it me, then; give it me. I will hold it for you: I must play with something.

Sing, sing; I am quite impatient.

THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845)

Thomas Hood was a magazine editor, an illustrator, and a writer of light verses, who, in the face of hardship and illness, produced some genuinely humorous lyrics. He is known especially, however, for his serious poems which illustrate the sympathy and restrained tenderness that was typical of the man.

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

"Drowned! Drowned!" — Hamlet

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly, 5
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements; 10
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully; 15
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly. 20

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her 25
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammy. 30

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home? 35

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one 40
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun! 45
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly 50
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged. 55

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window to casement,
From garret to basement, 60
She stood with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
 Made her tremble and shiver;
 But not the dark arch,
 Or the black flowing river:
 Mad from life's history,
 Glad to death's mystery,
 Swift to be hurled —
 Anywhere, anywhere
 Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
 No matter how coldly
 The rough river ran, —
 Over the brink of it,
 Picture it — think of it,
 Dissolute Man!
 Lave in it, drink of it,
 Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
 Lift her with care;
 Fashioned so slenderly,
 Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
 Stiffen so rigidly,
 Decently, kindly,
 Smooth and compose them;
 And her eyes, close them,
 Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
 Thro' muddy impurity,
 As when with the daring
 Last look of despairing
 Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
 Spurred by contumely,
 Cold inhumanity,
 Burning insanity,
 Into her rest. —
 Cross her hands humbly,
 As if praying dumbly,
 Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
 Her evil behavior,
 And leaving with meekness,
 Her sins to her Savior!

1843

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,
 With eyelids heavy and red,
 A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
 Plying her needle and thread —

Stitch! stitch! stitch!
 In poverty, hunger, and dirt, —
 And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
 She sang the "Song of the Shirt."

"Work! work! work!
 While the cock is crowing aloof!
 And work — work — work,
 Till the stars shine through the roof!
 It's Oh! to be a slave
 Along with the barbarous Turk,
 Where woman has never a soul to save,
 If this is Christian work!

"Work — work — work,
 Till the brain begins to swim;
 Work — work — work,
 Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
 Seam, and gusset, and band,
 Band, and gusset, and seam,
 Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
 And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, men, with sisters dear!
 Oh, men, with mothers and wives!
 It is not linen you're wearing out
 But human creatures' lives!
 Stitch — stitch — stitch,
 In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
 Sewing at once, with a double thread,
 A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

"But why do I talk of Death?
 That phantom of grisly bone,
 I hardly fear its terrible shape,
 It seems so like my own —
 It seems so like my own,
 Because of the fasts I keep;
 Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
 And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work — work — work!
 My labor never flags;
 And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
 A crust of bread — and rags.
 That shattered roof — this naked floor —
 A table — a broken chair —
 And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
 For sometimes falling there!

"Work — work — work!
 From weary chime to chime,
 Work — work — work,
 As prisoners work for crime!
 Band, and gusset, and seam,
 Seam, and gusset, and band,
 Till the heart is sick, and the brain be-
 numbed,
 As well as the weary hand.

"Work — work — work,
In the dull December light,
And work — work — work,
When the weather is warm and bright, — 60
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

"Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet,
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet;
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel, 70
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal.

"Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope, 75
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!" 80

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch! 85
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch, —
Would that its tone could reach the Rich! —
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

1843

THE DEATH BED

We watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak, 5
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied — 10
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,

Her quiet eyelids closed — she had 15
Another morn than ours.

MORNING MEDITATIONS

Let Taylor preach upon a morning breeze,
How well to rise while nights and larks are
flying —
For my part getting up seems not so easy
By half as *lying*.

What if the lark does carol in the sky, 5
Soaring beyond the sight to find him out —
Wherefore am I to rise at such a fly?
I'm not a trout.

Talk not to me of bees and such like hums,
The smell of sweet herbs at the morning
prime — 10
Only lie long enough, and bed becomes
A bed of *time*.

To me Dan Phœbus and his car are nought,
His steeds that paw impatiently about, —
Let them enjoy, say I, as horses ought, 15
The first turn-out!

Right beautiful the dewy meads appear
Besprinkled by the rosy-fingered girl;
What then, — if I prefer my pillow-beer
To early pearl? 20

My stomach is not ruled by other men's,
And grumbling for a reason, quaintly begs
Wherefore should master rise before the hens
Have laid their eggs?

Why from a comfortable pillow start 25
To see faint flushes in the east awaken?
A fig, I say, for any streaky part,
Excepting bacon.

An early riser Mr. Gray has drawn,
Who used to haste the dewy grass among, 30
"To meet the sun upon the upland lawn" —
Well — he died young.

With charwomen such early hours agree,
And sweeps that earn betimes their bit and
sup;
But I'm no climbing boy, and needs not be 35
All up — all up!

So here I'll lie, my morning calls deferring,
Till something nearer to the stroke of noon; —
A man that's fond precociously of *stirring*,
Must be a spoon. 40

CHARLES LAMB (1775-1834)

Charles Lamb was born February 10, 1775, in the Temple, London. His father was the trusted servant of a barrister who had his residence in that ancient abode of the law. Charles was the youngest of several children. He was sent to school at Christ's Hospital, where he knew Coleridge and Leigh Hunt; and, at the age of seventeen, was appointed to a clerkship in the East India House. His older sister, Mary, was subject to fits of insanity in one of which she killed her mother and wounded her father. After her release from the asylum Charles and Mary Lamb took up their life together, which was maintained in various lodgings in London. His rooms were always a gathering place for literary men of the day — Wordsworth and Southey came there in their visits from the Lakes, to meet Hazlitt, Keats, Leigh Hunt, and others. Lamb was an urban spirit; he always declared that he preferred the pavements and life of the city to the rarest views of Skiddaw and Helvellyn. After his retirement from the India House in 1825 he and his sister lived in the suburbs, at Enfield and Edmonton, until his death in 1834.

Charles Lamb's employment at the India House was not engrossing. He had leisure for writing, and attempted many of the forms current in his day, fiction, poetry, tragedy, comedy, and the essay. It was in this last that he won the success which makes him immortal. He began to contribute the *Essays of Elia* to the *London Magazine* in 1820. In these his charm of personality, his tastes and his prejudices, his whimsical humor which delights in the oddities of people and the incongruities of events, his tenderness toward misfortune, all those things which made him lovable to his friends are preserved to make him beloved of his readers. Lamb had a temperament to which the positive, downright, and matter-of-fact was insipid; to which only the subtle, elusive, and suggestive had charm. More than any English writer he must be read not for the importance of what he says of morals and social problems, but for what he is.

Lamb's works have been collected and edited by Alfred Ainger (1883-88) and by E. V. Lucas (seven volumes), with a *Life of Charles Lamb* in two volumes. The short life by Canon Ainger in the English Men of Letters Series is excellent. Hazlitt wrote of Lamb in *Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen*, and in *The Spirit of the Age*.

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO

Published in the *London Magazine*, November, 1820, with the signature "Elia." His opening sentence refers to an earlier essay on the subject published under his own name. Christ's Hospital was an endowed school for poor boys which Lamb and Coleridge entered at the same time, at the ages of seven and ten respectively. It is the situation of Coleridge, far from home and friends, which Lamb in part assumes.

In Mr. Lamb's *Works*, published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,¹ such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of

going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf — our *crug* — moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of "extraordinary bread and butter," from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant — (we had three banyan² to four meat days in the week) — was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*²), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth — our scanty mutton crags on Fridays — and rather more savory, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays

¹ A name given to days on which sailors received no allowance of meat.
² horse flesh.

¹ Recollections of Christ's Hospital.

(the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion) — he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can — for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes. — How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like

young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying — while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings — the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them! — How faint and languid, finally we would return, towards nightfall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless — shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower — to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor¹ (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights — and this not once, but night after night — in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. — The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow; and under the cruellest penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——,² who, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer

¹ Samuel Salt, the employer under whose roof John Lamb and his family lived.

² Hodges. (Name supplied by Lamb.)

offence in the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered — at Nevis, I think, or St. Kitts, — some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat — happier than Caligula's minion,¹ could he have kept his own counsel — but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables — waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek, well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

"To feed our mind with idle portraiture."

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But

¹ The Emperor Caligula appointed a horse as chief consul.

these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fathaters) and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation. — suffered under the imputation.

"— 'Twas said,
He ate strange flesh."

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me) — and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumored that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his school-fellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious

scraps, turned out to be the parents of —, an honest couple come to decay, — whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds! — The governors on this occasion, much to their honor, voted a present relief to the family of —, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to —, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. — I had left school then, but I well remember —. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence. — As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little square, Bedlam cells,¹ where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket — a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted — with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water — who *might not speak to him*; — or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude: — and here he was shut up by himself *of nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.² This was the penalty for the second offence. — Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

¹ Bedlam was a corruption of Bethlehem. The hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem was used as an asylum for the insane.

² One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with. — This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue. (Lamb's note.)

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fe*,¹ arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire — all trace of his late "watchet weeds"² carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante³ had seized upon him. In this disguise he was brought into the hall (*L's favorite state-room*), where awaited him the whole number of his schoolfellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia*; ⁴ not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*,⁵ to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and

¹ act of faith. The occasion on which heretics were burned at the stake.

² blue uniforms.

³ Cf. *Inferno* Cantos XXVIII-XXX.

⁴ extreme punishments.

⁵ Garments of the same cut as those woven by the monks of St. Benedict, worn by victims of an *auto da fe*.

Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master: but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment, of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will — holding it “like a dancer.” It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often stayed away whole days from us; and when he came, it made no difference to us — he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to “insolent Greece or haughty Rome,” that passed current among us — Peter Wilkins — the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle — the Fortunate Blue-Coat Boy — and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operation; making little sundials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles*; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game “French and English,” and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time — mixing the useful with the agreeable — as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke¹ chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He

was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levée, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with Sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, “how neat and fresh the twigs looked.” While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite,² we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon’s miracle,³ while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry. His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a “playing holiday.”

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.⁴ — He would laugh, ay, and heartily,

¹ Pythagoras enjoined silence upon his pupils in regard to their own conclusions until they had listened to his lectures for five years.

² Cf. Judges vi. 36–38.

³ In this and every thing B. was the antipodes of his condutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the

⁴ Both exponents of a natural system of education.

but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*¹ — or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*,² or *inspicere in patinas*,³ of Terence — thin jests; which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis*⁴ enough to move a Roman muscle. — He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discolored, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. — J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?" — Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, Sirrah" (his favorite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you," — then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair — and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell — "*and I will too*." — In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor*⁵ was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph, and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W — having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned*. This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the oral or declaratory struck so irresistibly upon

the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the Country Spectator doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C. — when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed — "Poor J. B.! — may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. — First Grecian¹ of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T — e.² What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors! — You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate! — Co-Grecian with S. was Th — ,³ who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th — was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. — Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta) a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the Country Spectator) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe. — M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas*⁴ (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the

chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. — B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was too classical for representation. (Lamb's note.)

¹ Horace. *Satires*, I, 7, 35.

² sad severity of countenance. (Terence, *Andrea*, V, II, 16.)

³ to look into the platter. (Terence, *Adelphi*, III, III, 74.)

⁴ power

⁵ raging madness.

¹ Grecians were scholars recommended each year to Cambridge University.

² Trollope, who succeeded Boyer as head master.

³ Thornton.

⁴ newness of the rule.

minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and unassuming. — Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the Aboriginal Britons, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems: a pale, studious Grecian. — Then followed poor S——,¹ ill-fated M——!² of these the Muse is silent,

Finding some of Edward's race
Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee — the dark pillar not yet turned — Samuel Taylor Coleridge — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! — How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar — while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy*! Many were the “wit-combats” (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——,³ “which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.”⁴

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus*⁵ of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, in-

censed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angelic look, exchanged the half-formed terrible “bl——,” for a gentler greeting — “*bless thy handsome face!*”

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia — the junior Le G—— and F——;¹ who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect — ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning — exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp; perishing, one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca: — Le G—— sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured; F—— dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——,² the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——,³ mildest of Missionaries — and both my good friends still — close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

1821

Published in the *London Magazine*, February, 1821. It has been conjectured that the original of Mrs. Battle was Sarah Burney, wife of Rear Admiral James Burney, with whom Lamb often played whist.

“A clear fire, a clean hearth,⁴ and the rigor of the game.” This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God) who, next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary who has slipt a wrong card, to take it up and play another.⁵ These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play

¹ “Scott died in Bedlam.” (Lamb's note.)

² “Maunde, dismissed school.” (Lamb's note.)

³ Charles Valentine Le Grice.

⁴ From Fuller's accounts of the combats of wit between Jonson and Shakespeare.

⁵ Handsome Nireus, most beautiful of the Greek warriors against Troy.

¹ Favell.

² Frederick William Franklin.

³ Marmaduke Thompson.

⁴ This was before the introduction of rugs, Reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswart cinders betwixt your foot and the marble. (Lamb's note.)

⁵ As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day and lose him the next. (Lamb's note.)

at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favors. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side — their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favorite suit.

I never in my life — and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it — saw her take out her snuffbox when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced or connived at miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candor, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do, — and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards — over a book.

Pope was her favorite author: his Rape of the Lock her favorite work. She once did me the favor to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, *tradrille*. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles: ¹ but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy

and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners — a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of *Spadille* ¹ — absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces; — the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone; — above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*, ² — to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist; — all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel; perpetually changing postures and connexions; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath; — but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational, antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favorite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage — nothing superfluous. No *flushes* — that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up: — that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and color, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colors of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit for dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled — never to take the field? — She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and,

¹ ace of spades.

² In *ombre*, played by four, one may take a partner or play alone (*sans prendre*). *Vole* is to take all the tricks.

¹ William Lisle Bowles who published an edition of Pope in 1807.

in my mind, would have stript it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? — Why two colors, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it? —

“But the eye, my dear Madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason — he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualising would have kept out. — You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings — but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards? — the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession — the gay triumph-assuring scarlets — the contrasting deadly, killing sables — the ‘hoary majesty of spades’ — Pam in all his glory!” —

“All these might be dispensed with; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. — Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature’s), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in! — Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers — (work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol, — or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)² — exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors’ money) or chalk and a slate!” —

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favorite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (Old Walter

Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated)¹ brought with him from Florence: this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say, — disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce “*go*,” or “*that’s a go*.” She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring “*two for his heels*.” There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms — such as pique repique — the capot — they savored (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus: — Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight: with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play. — Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille. But in square games (*she meant whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honor, common to every species — though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neu-

¹ I knave of clubs.

² Acts XIX, 24.

¹ In The South Sea House.

trality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold — or even an interested — by-stander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. — By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favorite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue — and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion! — chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious, that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending? — Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number — and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? — Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit — his memory, or combination-faculty rather — against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. — She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance, — the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with unsufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles, and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly) were entirely misplaced, and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and color. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other: — that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little blood shed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innocuous, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such. —

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been very agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget — Bridget Elia.¹

I grant there is something sneaking in it: but with a toothache or a sprained ankle, — when you are subdued and humble, — you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*. —

I grant it is not the highest style of man — I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle — she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize. —

At such times those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible. — I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted² her) — (dare I tell thee how foolish I am?) — I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

1 Mary Lamb.

2 won all the tricks.

IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

Published in the *London Magazine*, August, 1821. It was originally entitled "Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and Other Imperfect Sympathies."

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in anything. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch. — *Religio Medici*.

That the author of the *Religio Medici*, mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animal he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself — earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,

Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices — made up of likings and dislikings — the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely English word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or fellow. I cannot like all people alike.

I would be understood as confining myself to the subjects of imperfect sympathies. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct antipathy. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

— We by proof find there should be
Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
That though he can show no just reason why
For any former wrong or injury,
Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood's *Hierarchy of Angels*, and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other rea-

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me — and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them — a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game per-adventure — and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath — but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries, as they arise, without waiting for their full development. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth — if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests anything, but unloads his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness. He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always

son for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the King.

— The cause to which that act compell'd him
Was, he ne'er loved him since ne first beheld him.

(Lamb's note.)

about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian — you never see the first dawn, the early streaks. — He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox — he has no doubts. Is he an infidel — he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him — for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!" — said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to *John Bunce*¹ — "did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. — After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends) — when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. — Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth — which nobody doubts. They do

1 The title of a book by Thomas Amory (1691–1788).

not so properly affirm, as announce it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son — when four of them started up at once to inform me, that "that was impossible, because he was dead." An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.² The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another! — In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your "imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses;" and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him, — Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory² and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. — Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's *History* compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued *Humphrey Clinker*?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the

1 There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. — *Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.* (Lamb's note.)

2 Roderick Random in Smollett's novel of that name.

nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln.¹ Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side, — of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candor, liberality, the light of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change — for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as are all beauties in the dark. I boldly confess I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If they are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it has fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing — Christians judaizing — puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. B — would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of — Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!" The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B — has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble² delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they? — but you

seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them. — Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it — but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces — or rather masks — that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller¹ beautifully calls — these "images of God cut in ebony." But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them — because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) "to live with them." I am all over sophisticated — with humors, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whims, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn)² Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth — the one ap-

¹ A well-known legend of the ritualistic murder of a Christian child by the Jews. See Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*.

² John Braham (1774-1856), a popular tenor of the day.

³ John Philip Kemble (1757-1823), the chief Shakespearean actor of this time.

¹ Thomas Fuller (1608-61), the author of *The Worthies of England*.

² John Evelyn (1620-1706), an antiquarian and diarist.

plicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth — oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed — and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness — if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. "You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight," said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. "Thereafter as the answers may be," retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances. — I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straightest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves

to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formally tendered it — so much for tea — I, in humble imitation, tendering mine — for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible — and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious people for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sate as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbor, "Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?" and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

DREAM CHILDREN: A REVERIE

Published in the *London Magazine* for January, 1822. Canon Ainger identifies Alice W——n with Anna Simmons, a girl Lamb had known when visiting his grandmother in Hertfordshire. Bartram was in fact the name of her husband.

Children love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk¹ (a hundred times bigger than that in which they

¹ Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, for fifty years housekeeper at Blakesware, in Hertfordshire.

and papa lived) which had been the scene — so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer — here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted — the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she

was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm;" and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she — and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out — sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me — and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then, — and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at — or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me — or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth — or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings, — I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grand-children, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle,

John L.—, 'because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair

1 Charles Lamb's brother, John.

was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech; "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name"—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

Published in the *London Magazine*, September, 1822. The tradition as to the origin of cooking was communicated to Lamb by his friend, Thomas Manning, a traveller in China and Thibet.

Mankind, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his *Mundane Mutations*, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Cho-fang, literally the Cook's Holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following.—The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as youngers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the

remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labor of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odor assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from? — not from the burnt cottage — he had smelt that smell before — indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted — *crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the newborn pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you

must be eating fire, and I know not what — what have you got there, I say?"

"O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste — O Lord," — with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of

them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given, — to the surprise of the whole court, townfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present — without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind. —

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*,¹ I will maintain it to be the most delicate — *princeps obsoniorum*.²

I speak not of your grown porkers — things between pig and pork — those hobble-dehoys — but a young and tender suckling — under a moon old — guiltless as yet of the sty — with no original speck of the *amor immunditie*,³ the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest — his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble — the mild forerunner or *præludium*, of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled — but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called — the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance — with the adhesive oleaginous — O call it not fat — but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it — the tender blossoming of fat — fat cropped in the bud — taken in the shoot — in the first innocence — the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food — the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna — or, rather, fat, and lean, (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing — it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! — Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes — radiant jellies — shooting stars. —

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! — wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indolence which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal — wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation — from these sins he is happily snatched away —

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care —

his memory is odoriferous — no clown curs-eth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon — no coal-heaver bolteth him in reeking sausages — he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure — and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of Savors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent — a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause — too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and ex-coriateth the lips that approach her — like lovers' kisses, she biteth — she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish — but she stoppeth at the palate — she meddleth not with the

¹ world of eatables. ² prince of viands.
³ love of the unclean.

appetite — and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig — let me speak his praise — is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertisted, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is — good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbors' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capbns, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavors, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate. — It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy like, I made him a present of — the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrate-

ful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I — I myself, and not another — would eat her nice cake — and what should I say to her the next time I saw her — how naughty I was to part with her pretty present! — and the odor of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure, and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last — and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto. —

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavor of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are — but consider, he is a weakling — a flower.

1 A Roman Catholic college for English boys in France.

IN PRAISE OF CHIMNEY- SWEEPERS

Published in the *London Magazine* for May, 1822.

I like to meet a sweep — understand me — not a grown sweeper — old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive — but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigrity, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek — such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning toward these dim specks — poor blots — innocent blacknesses —

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth — these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *faucis Averni*¹ — to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades! — to shudder with the idea that “now, surely, he must be lost for ever!” — to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight — and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly; not much unlike the old stage direction in *Macbeth*, where the “Apparition of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, rises.”

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him two-pence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels² (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.³

¹ jaws of Hades.

² with chilblains.

³ sixpence.

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 'yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this “wholesome and pleasant beverage,” on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street — *the only Salopian house*,¹ — I have never yet ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients — a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper — whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lentive — but so it is, that no possible taste or odor to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals — cats — when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader — if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact — he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savory mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan

¹ Saloop was an herb drink, similar to sassafras tea.

leaving his bed to resume the premature labors of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honors of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odors. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapors in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop* — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpenned sweep. Him shouldst thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three half-pennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny) — so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'er-charged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin — so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredieniced soups — nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. — In the last winter but one, pacing along Chapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough — yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened — when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that

Hogarth¹ — but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the *March to Finchley*, grinning at the pieman — there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever — with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth — for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it — that I could have been content, if the honor of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket, presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to "air" them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud

Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility: — and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticesments of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu² be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless defiliations.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since — under a ducal canopy — (that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a con-

¹ William Hogarth (1697–1764), an English painter and engraver. The *March to Finchley* was the subject of one of his prints.

² Edward Wortley Montagu ran away from Westminster School to become for a time a chimney-sweeper.

noisseur) — encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets interwoven — folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius — was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitation to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle. — But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty, as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions — is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was but now creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*,¹ and resting-place. — By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE² was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bar-

tholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweepers in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quitted out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlors three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savor. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD,¹ ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table — for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humors of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honor the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing “the gentleman,” and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings — how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors — how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it “must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating” — how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender

¹ cradle clothes.

² A schoolfellow of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital.

¹ John Fenwick.

juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony — how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts — “The King,” — the “Cloth,” — which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering; — and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, “May the Brush supersede the Laurel.” All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a “Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,” which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savoriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

Golden lads and lasses must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust —

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died — of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

POOR RELATIONS

Published in the *London Magazine* for May, 1823. In style it is in part an excellent imitation of the character writing of the seventeenth century.

A poor Relation — is the most irrelevant thing in nature, — a piece of impertinent correspondency, — an odious approximation, — a haunting conscience, — a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of our prosperity, — an unwelcome remembrancer, — a perpetually recurring mortification, — a drain on your purse, — a more intolerable dun upon your pride, — a drawback upon success, — a rebuke to your rising, — a stain in your blood, — a blot on your 'scutcheon, — a rent in your garment, — a death's head at your banquet, — Agath-

ocles' pot,^r — a Mordecai in your gate, — a Lazarus at your door, — a lion in your path, — a frog in your chamber, — a fly in your ointment, — a mote in your eye, — a triumph to your enemy, an apology to your friends, — the one thing not needful, — the hail in harvest, — the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you “That is Mr. —.” A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and, at the same time, seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling and — embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and — draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time — when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company, but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says with some complacency, “My dear, perhaps Mr. — will drop in to-day.” He remembereth birth-days — and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small — yet suffereth himself to be importuned into a slice against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port — yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think “they have seen him before.” Everyone speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be — a tide waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own. He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent; with more boldness he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent — yet 'tis odds, from his garb and demeanor, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table; refuseth on the score of poverty, and — resents being left out. When the company break up he proffereth to go for a coach — and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather; and will thrust in some mean and quite unimportant anecdote of —

^r Agathocles was the son of a potter. He became the ruler of Sicily.

the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as "he is blest in seeing it now." He reviveth past situations to institute what he calleth — favorable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture: and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle — which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet; and did not know, till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable; his compliments perverse; his talk a trouble; his stay pertinacious; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is — a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other; you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. "He is an old humorist," you may say, "and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one." But in the indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. "She is plainly related to the L——s; or what does she at their house?" She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes — *aliquando sufflaminandus erat*¹ — but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped — after the gentlemen. Mr. — requests the honor of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former — because he does. She calls the servant *Sir*; and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronizes her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for harpsichord.

¹ Sometimes he had to be restrained.

Richard Amlet, Esq.,² in the play, is a noticeable instance of the disadvantages to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to an acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has wherewithal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W——³ was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect, which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion to the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom.³ He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer must have walked erect; and in which Hooker, in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no commendable vanity. In the depths of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's

¹ In Vanbrugh's *The Confederacy*.

² Favell, referred to in *Christ's Hospital*. "Favell left Cambridge because he was ashamed of his father who was a house-painter there." (Lamb's note.)

³ A reference to "the shirt of Nessus," by which Hercules was poisoned.

finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W—— had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man, the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called — the trading part of the latter especially — is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown — insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of —— college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him — finding him in a better mood — upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, “knew his mounted sign — and fled.” A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first

who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.⁷

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful; but this theme of poor relationship is replete with so much matter for tragic as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman, clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity; his words few or none; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so — for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined — and I thought he was the owner of all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning; a captive — a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses. My father had been a leading Mountaineer; and would still maintain the general superiority, in skill and

¹ In its siege by Wellington in 1813.

hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic — the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out — and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remembered with anguish the thought that came over me: "Perhaps he will never come here again." He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused with a resistance amounting to rigor, when my aunt — an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season — uttered the following memorable application — "Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day." The old gentleman said nothing at the time — but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it — "Woman, you are superannuated." John Billet did not survive long, after the digesting of this affront; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and, if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escritoire after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was — a Poor Relation.

A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

BY A FRIEND

This bit of self-portraiture was published in the *London Magazine* for January, 1823, shortly after the publication of the first collection of *Essays of Elia*. In abbreviated form it was used as a preface to the volume, *Last Essays of Elia*, in 1833.

This gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the *London Magazine* will henceforth know him no more.

Exactly at twelve last night, his queer spirit departed; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends T. and H., and the company, assembled there to welcome in another First of January, checked their carousals in mid-mirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an elegy; and Allan C., nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a *Tale of Lyddalcross*.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humor of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you — a sort of unlicked, incondite things — villanously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in a former Essay (to save many instances) — where under the *first person* (his favorite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connexions — in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs

and affections of another — making himself many, or reducing many unto himself — then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot; or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure — irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred. — He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken) which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested. — Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *littérati*, were of his

councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*,¹ to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the color, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him — but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalized (and offences were sure to arise), he could not help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry — as the friendly vapor ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statish!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to him. "They take me for a visiting governor," he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His man-

¹ intimates.

ners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis*¹ never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

[He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escritoire*, which have been handed over to the editor of this magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed signature.]

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the export department of the East India House will forgive me if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk at which he had been planted for forty years; showed me ponderous tomes of figures, in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts, might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system; but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and how fortunate he con-

¹ The Roman dress of manhood.

sidered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them. "There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks," he would say, "than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with." He would brighten up sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when he consorted with Woodroffe and Wissett, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet); and Hoole, who translated Tasso; and Bartlemy Brown, whose father (God assail him therefor!) modernized Walton; and sly, warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days) and Campe and Fombelle, and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those days with Jack Burrell (the *bon-vivant* of the South-Sea House); and little Eyton (said to be a facsimile of Pope, — he was a miniature of a gentleman), that was cashier under him; and Dan Voight of the Custom-house, that left the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone, — for aught I know, to be re-united with them, — and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words only! His Essays found some favorers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his "weaved-up follies."]

PHIL-ELIA.

WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778–1830)

The father of William Hazlitt was a Unitarian clergyman, settled for a time at Maidstone, where in 1778 his second son, William, was born. The family moved to the United States in 1783, but returned to England in 1786. William was sent to a theological college at Hackney, but most of his education was the result of his own reading. In 1798, when the Hazlitts were living at Wem, in Shropshire, began the connection with Coleridge, narrated in *First Acquaintance with Poets*. He spent some time in Paris 1802–03, trying to become a painter. Returning to London he wrote on philosophy, politics, economics, and grammar. In 1808 he married Sarah Stoddard, who had a small estate at Winterslow near Salisbury, where they spent a number of years. In 1812 Hazlitt delivered a series of lectures on Modern Philosophy, but soon turned his attention to literature and dramatic criticism. He became dramatic critic of the *Morning Chronicle*, and delivered series of lectures on Shakespeare's characters and the *Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*, as well as on *The English Poets* and *The English Comic Writers*. His enduring fame, however, rests on the essays which he wrote for Hunt's *Examiner*, the *London Magazine*, and others, and which were collected under the titles, *The Round Table*, *Table Talk*, *The Plain Speaker*.

A series of criticisms on leading contemporary figures, called *The Spirit of the Age*, appeared in 1825. He also published a *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1828-30. He died in 1830.

Hazlitt was a friend of Charles Lamb, and a member of his circle, but no two men could have been more opposed in character and attitude toward life. Lamb was kindness itself, a perfect friend, drawing men to himself and to each other. Hazlitt was harsh and bitter, quarreling fiercely with his many enemies and sometimes with his few friends. As the result of his youth within a small dissenting body and his irregular education he felt a sense of exclusion from normal society. This became real when he espoused the cause of the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte, with whom his country was at war. He is said to have been one of four men in London to whom the British victory of Waterloo was a tragedy. His pro-French views were the cause of bitter hostility by the Tory reviews, the *Quarterly* and *Blackwood's*, which attacked his literary work without mercy. He responded with the ferocious *Letter to William Gifford*, the Editor of the *Quarterly*, in *The Spirit of the Age*. Hazlitt suffered keenly from his social maladjustment, though he carried it off with a kind of defiant bohemianism. He was a sensitive spirit. His sensibility and his complete freedom of speech are the chief qualities of his criticism. He felt keenly both beauty and deformity, and he expressed his feeling with gusto. This quality is still more notable in his essays upon life, such as *On Going a Journey*, or *The Fight*. But with Hazlitt, life and literature were not separate. His reading and his writing were important parts of his experience, and hence his attitude toward literature whether critical or creative remains extraordinarily vital.

Hazlitt's works have been collected in twelve volumes edited by Waller and Glover with an introductory essay by William Ernest Henley (1902-04). *Memoirs of William Hazlitt* (1867) and *Lamb and Hazlitt* (1900), both by his grandson, W. C. Hazlitt, are first-hand sources of information. A short biography by Augustine Birrell (1912) in the English Men of Letters series, and a very complete life by P. P. Howe, both partake of the interest of their subject.

MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS

This essay appeared in *The Liberal*, in 1823. Its substance was given in a letter in *The Examiner* in 1817. It throws light on the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth at Nether Stowey described in *Biographia Literaria*, chap. x. (See page 753.)

My father was a Dissenting Minister at W—m² in Shropshire; and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the "dreaded name of Demogorgon")² Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian congregation there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers. Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid; nor has he since, that I know of. He held the good town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense

for three weeks that he remained there, "fluttering the proud Salopians¹ like an eagle in a dove-cote"; and the Welsh mountains that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion, agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

"High-born Hoel's harp or soft Llewellyn's lay!"

As we passed along between W—m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue tops seen through the wintry branches, or the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the roadside, a sound was in my ears as of a Siren's song; I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep; but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the wayside, crushed, bleeding, lifeless; but now, bursting from the deadly bands that bound them,

"With Styx nine times round them,"

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes, catch the golden light of other years. My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this

¹ Wem.

² *Paradise Lost*, II, 964.

¹ People of Shropshire.

rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr. Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighborhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy. Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor; but in the meantime I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798. *Il y a des impressions que ni le tems ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dussé-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux tems de ma jeunesse ne peut renaitre pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.*¹ When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "AND HE WENT UP INTO THE MOUNTAIN TO PRAY, HIMSELF, ALONE." As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose

food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state — not their alliance, but their separation — on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made a poetical and pastoral excursion, — and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, "as though he should never be old," and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an ale-house, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

"Such were the notes our once-loved poet sung."

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together. Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes. I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still laboring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause*²; and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned everything into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of *JUS DIVINUM*³ on it:

"Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe."

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. "For those two hours," he afterwards was pleased to say, "he was conversing with W. H.'s forehead!" His appearance was different from

¹ There are impressions which neither time nor circumstances can efface. If I should live entire centuries, the sweet time of youth cannot return or efface itself from my memory.

² The cause of freedom, emphasized by the French Revolution.

³ Divine right (of kings).

what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with the small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright —

"As are the children of yon azure sheen."

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. "A certain tender bloom his face o'erspread," a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez. His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humored and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing — like what he has done. It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, "somewhat fat and palsy." His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven's, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different color) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith) to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart; and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up for ever, and disappear-

ing, like vaporish bubbles, in the human breast! After being tossed about from congregation to congregation in the heats of the Unitarian controversy, and squabbles about the American war, he had been relegated to an obscure village, where he was to spend the last thirty years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved, the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Here he passed his days, repining but resigned, in the study of the Bible, and the perusal of the Commentators, — huge folios, not easily got through, one of which would outlast a winter! Why did he pore on these from morn to night (with the exception of a walk in the fields or a turn in the garden to gather broccoli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rearing, with no small degree of pride and pleasure)? Here were "no figures nor no fantasies" — neither poetry nor philosophy — nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite modern curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes there appeared, within the pages of the ponderous, unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred name of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: pressed down by the weight of the style, worn to the last fading thinness of the understanding, there were glimpses, glimmering notions of the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-trees hovering in the horizon, and processions of camels at the distance of three thousand years; there was Moses with the Burning Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes, types, shadows, glosses on the law and the prophets; there were discussions (dull enough) on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation! there were outlines, rude guesses at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riches of Solomon's Temple; questions as to the date of the creation, predictions of the end of all things; the great lapses of time, the strange mutations of the globe were unfolded with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over; and though the soul might slumber with an hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysteries drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill-exchanged for all the sharpened realities of sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father's life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of nondescript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor

had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlor, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had found a new ally in Fancy!¹ Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects. At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wolstonecraft and Mackintosh.² The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* as a capital performance) as a clever scholastic man — a master of the topics, — or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke, either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature: Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to commonplaces. On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavor imaginable. Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom Wedgwood (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them — "He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance!" Godwin³ had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success; Coleridge

told him — "If there had been a man of genius in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wolstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He replied, that "this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." He did not rate Godwin very high⁴ (this was caprice or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wolstonecraft's powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for book-making. We talked a little about Holcroft.⁵ He had been asked if he was not much struck with him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck by him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of every the commonest word, exclaiming, "What do you mean by a *sensation*, Sir? What do you mean by an *idea*?" This, Coleridge said, was barricading the road to truth: — it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took. I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember; but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury. When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of £150 a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy. Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on my departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva's winding vales, or by the shores of old romance. Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was henceforth to inhabit the Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delectable Mountains. Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty. I was presently relieved from the dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced

¹ My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantries, I have never seen them equalled. (Hazlitt's note.)

² Mary Wolstonecraft and Sir James Mackintosh were both sympathizers with the French Revolution. The former married William Godwin and was the mother of Mary Godwin, the wife of Shelley. Mackintosh answered Burke's attack on the French Revolution in *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, 1793.

³ William Godwin (1756-1836), a radical, author of *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, 1793.

⁴ He complained in particular of the presumption of attempting to establish the future immortality of man, "without" (as he said) "knowing what Death was or what Life was" — and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both. (Hazlitt's note.)

⁵ Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), a dramatist and novelist, also one of the radicals of the time.

towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, *Mr. Coleridge, Nether Stowey, Somersetshire*; and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come half-way to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in Cassandra) when he sees a thunder-bolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

—— "sounding on his way."¹

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the foot-path to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He seemed unable to keep on in a straight line. He spoke slightly of Hume (whose *Essay on Miracles* he said was stolen from an objection started in one of South's sermons — *Credat Judæus Apella!*)² I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical *choke-pears*, his *Treatise on Human Nature*, to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling, light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candor. He however made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley. He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision*

¹ Hazlitt confuses Chaucer's word "sowning," inclining to, with Wordsworth's use of "sounding," *Excursion*, III, 71:

"Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way."

² Let the Jew Apella believe it.

HORACE, *Satires*, I, 5, 100.

as a masterpiece of analytical reasoning. So it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingly angry with Dr. Johnson for striking the stone with his foot, in allusion to this author's *Theory of Matter and Spirit*, and saying, "Thus I confute him, Sir." Coleridge drew a parallel (I don't know how he brought about the connection) between Bishop Berkeley and Tom Paine. He said the one was an instance of a subtle, the other of an acute mind, than which no two things could be more distinct. The one was a shop-boy's quality, the other the characteristic of a philosopher. He considered Bishop Butler as a true philosopher, a profound and conscientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak of his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls' Chapel*, of which I had never heard. Coleridge somehow always contrived to prefer the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instance he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue of sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special-pleading; the *Sermons* (with the Preface to them) are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and without bias. I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*) — and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped half way down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labor in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper. I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places? If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney to assist me, I would write a *Sonnet to the Road between W——m and*

Shrewsbury, and immortalize every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill stooped with all its pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed! I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley, praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that "the fact of his work on *Moral and Political Philosophy* being made a text-book in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character." We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward, pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honored ever with suitable regard." He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with any thing at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleyan Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself) of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's *Vision of Judgment*,¹ and also from that other Vision of Judgment, which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junta,² has taken into his especial keeping!

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy: I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me half-way on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imagi-

native creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sun-sets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the spring.* This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings. I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increased my ardor. In the meantime I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England, in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*, and I applied it, *con amore*, to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it, my spirit was baptized in the waters of Helicon!

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untired feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones³ and the adventure of the muff. I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read *Paul and Virginia*. Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read! I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behavior of the heroine in the last fatal scene, who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake, that I thought he had borrowed the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places* from the local inscriptions of the same kind in *Paul and Virginia*. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Any the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose

¹ Southey's *Vision of Judgment* was a poem celebrating the reception of George III into heaven. Byron's satire upon it appeared in the *Liberal*.

² Murray was Byron's publisher, and also of the *Tory Quarterly Review*. His office was in Bridge Street, London.

³ In Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Book X, Chapter V.

in his mind; for whatever *he* added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment. I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read *Camilla*.¹ So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted everything!

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the sea-shore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins, where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*. The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest. Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's poems, the *Lyrical Ballads*, which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sybilline Leaves*.² I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I. and II. and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

— "hear the loud stag speak."

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fulness of

the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thoughtless happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium. As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadows of what *has been!*

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice the ballad of *Betty Foy*. I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted. But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*, I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

"In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,"

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring:

"While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed."

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

"Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fixed fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,"

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to believe in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-factness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence. His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air; it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the gold-finch sang. He said, however, (if I remember right) that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it, so that his soul seemed to inhabit the uni-

¹ A novel by Frances Burney, 1796.

² Coleridge published a volume of verse under this title in 1817.

verse like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction. The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge's cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend's description of him, but was more gaunt and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the costume of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell.¹ There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust wants the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*,² is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that "his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching his a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre*,³ by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum*⁴ merit was however by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a discovery, or

thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics! Whatever might be thought of the poem, "his face was a book where men might read strange matters," and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chaunt* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*. Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copse-wood; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a straight gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption. Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighborhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbor made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole,¹ sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*. It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton. We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester, and I. This Chester was a native of Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He "followed in the chace like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry." He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover, which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a

¹ The hero of Wordsworth's poem by this name, published in 1819.

² Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846), a painter, introduced a portrait of Wordsworth into an historical picture on this subject.

³ A drama produced in 1797, by M. G. Lewis (1775-1818), whose earlier tale, *The Monk*, had given him the nickname.

⁴ Power of captivating.

¹ A friend of Coleridge who was responsible for his settlement at Nether Stowey.

state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound, that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way: yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester. He afterwards followed Coleridge into Germany, where the Kantian philosophers were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's, when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so. We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us: contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Gaspar Poussin's or Domenichino's. We had a long day's march — (our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue) — through Minehead and by the Blue Anchor, and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs. The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths overlooking the channel, with the Welsh hills beyond, and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us, and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Mariner*. At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath, into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull forever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*. A thunderstorm came on while we

were at the inn, and Coleridge was running out bareheaded to enjoy the commotion of the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as if in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angry sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drops. Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*,¹ but they had relinquished the design. In the morning of the second day, we breakfasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlor, on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the very sight of the bee-hives from which it had been taken, and a garden full of thyme and wild flowers that had produced it. On this occasion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's *Georgics*, but not well. I do not think he had much feeling for the classical or elegant. It was in this room that we found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons*, lying in a window seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, "*That is true fame!*" He said Thomson was a great poet, rather than a good one; his style was as meretricious as his thoughts were natural. He spoke of Cowper as the best modern poet. He said the *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about to be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see how far the public taste would endure poetry written in a more natural and simple style than had hitherto been attempted; totally discarding the artifices of poetical diction, and making use only of such words as had probably been common in the most ordinary language since the days of Henry II. Some comparison was introduced between Shakespeare and Milton. He said "he hardly knew which to prefer. Shakespeare appeared to him a mere stripling in the art; he was as tall and as strong, with infinitely more activity than Milton, but he never appeared to have come to man's estate; or if he had, he would not have been a man, but a monster." He spoke with contempt of Gray, and with intolerance of Pope. He did not like the versification of the latter. He observed that "the ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages." He thought little of Junius as a writer; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson; and a much higher opinion of Burke as an orator and politician, than of Fox or Pitt. He however thought him very inferior in richness of style and imagery to some of our elder prose-writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor. He

¹ By the Swiss poet Solomon Gessner, published in 1758.

liked Richardson, but not Fielding; nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.¹ In short, he was profound and discriminating with respect to those authors whom he liked, and where he gave his judgment fair play; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes. We loitered on the "ribbed sea-sands," in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said "he did not know how it was that they ventured, but, Sir, we have a nature towards one another." This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted. I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the mark in the sand put one in mind of a man's foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man's foot (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man's foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest anything to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke curling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmin of Taunton. I asked him if he had prepared anything for the occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him, — this was a fault, — but we met in the evening at Bridgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road,

¹ He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael, and at this time I had as little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffalmacco and others; of one in particular where Death is seen in the air breathing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneel to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and fine a moral as this at any time. (Hazlitt's note.)

to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of *Remorse*; which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston's¹ and the Drury-lane boards,

"Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,

And give those scenes thine everlasting life."

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out. It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a commonplace-book under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot* in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge, where they were disputing fiercely which was the best — *Man as he was, or man as he is to be*. "Give me," says Lamb, "man as he is *not* to be." This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues. — Enough of this for the present.

"But there is matter for another rhyme,
And I to this may add a second tale."

ON GOING A JOURNEY

First published in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1822. It was reprinted in *Table Talk*, 1821–22.

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

"The fields his study, nature was his book."

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbowroom and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

— "a friend in my retreat,

Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet."

¹ Robert William Elliston (1774–1831), a favorite actor.

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

"May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,"

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner — and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sunless treasuries," burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff o' the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect

of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said; but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the syncretical method on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is shortsighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the color of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humor. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you — these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined

to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation; and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no tongue." My old friend C——, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had;" and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:

— "Here be woods as green

As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbors o'ergrown with woodbine, caves and
dells;

Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each
night,

Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."

(Faithful Shepherdess)

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds; but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot: I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-

talk. L—— is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey, and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavor of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!" These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea —

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate —"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper — eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet! Sancho² in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen. — *Procul, O procul este profani!*³ These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself.

¹ Charles Lamb.

² Sancho Panza in *Don Quixote*.

³ "Avaunt! avaunt! ye unhalloed!"

VIRGIL, *Æneid*, VI, 258.

But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world; but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges — "lord of one's self, uncumbered with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion — to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties — to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweetbreads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening — and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlor*! One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world; an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns — sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-Common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas — at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's¹ (I think it was) where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons,² into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight — at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, as I

remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla*. It was on the 10th of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighborhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not."

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness

¹ A small town near Peterborough.

² Raphael's cartoons.

1 tidbit.

as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the shortsightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert."¹ All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast; — the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollec-

tions, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten! — To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place;" nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honors indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat* — shewed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

"With glistening spires and pinnacles
adorned" —

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges — was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered Cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. — As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of

¹ From Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676).

Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. — Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbor, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people! — There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else; but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful, and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings:

"Out of my country and myself I go."

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts,

1 risk.

do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

THE FIGHT

The Fight was published in the *New Monthly Magazine* for February, 1822. The famous battle had occurred on December 11, 1821.

"— The fight, the fight's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."

Where there's a will, there's a way. — I said so to myself, as I walked down Chancery-lane, about half-past six o'clock on Monday the 10th of December, to inquire at Jack Randall's where the fight the next day was to be; and I found "the proverb" nothing "musty" in the present instance. I was determined to see this fight, come what would, and see it I did, in great style. It was my first fight, yet it more than answered my expectations. Ladies! it is to you I dedicate this description; nor let it seem out of character for the fair to notice the exploits of the brave. Courage and modesty are the old English virtues; and may they never look cold and askance on one another! Think, ye fairest of the fair, loveliest of the lovely kind, ye practisers of soft enchantment, how many more ye kill with poisoned baits than ever fell in the ring; and listen with subdued air and without shuddering, to a tale tragic only in appearance, and sacred to the Fancy!*

I was going down Chancery-lane, thinking to ask at Jack Randall's where the fight was to be, when looking through the glass-door of the *Hole in the Wall*, I heard a gentleman asking the same question at Mrs. Randall, as the author of *Waverley* would express it. Now Mrs. Randall stood answering the gentleman's question, with the authenticity of the lady of the Champion of the Light Weights. Thinks I, I'll wait till this person comes out, and learn from him how it is. For to say a truth, I was not fond of going into this house of call for heroes and philosophers, ever since the owner of it (for Jack is no gentleman) threatened once upon a time to kick me out of doors for wanting a mutton-chop at his hospitable board, when the conqueror in thirteen battles was more full of

* A slang term for the supporters of the sport of pugilism.

blue ruin than of good manners. I was the more mortified at this repulse, inasmuch as I had heard Mr. James Simpkins, hosiery in the Strand, one day when the character of the *Hole in the Wall* was brought in question, observe — "The house is a very good house, and the company quite genteel: I have been there myself!" Remembering this unkind treatment of mine host, to which mine hostess was also a party, and not wishing to put her in unquiet thoughts at a time jubilant like the present, I waited at the door, when, who should issue forth but my friend Jo. Toms, and turning suddenly up Chancery-lane with that quick jerk and impatient stride which distinguishes a lover of the Fancy, I said, "I'll be hanged if that fellow is not going to the fight, and is on his way to get me to go with him." So it proved in effect, and we agreed to adjourn to my lodgings to discuss measures with that cordiality which makes old friends like new, and new friends like old, on great occasions. We are cold to others only when we are dull in ourselves, and have neither thoughts nor feelings to impart to them. Give a man a topic in his head, a throb of pleasure in his heart, and he will be glad to share it with the first person he meets. Toms and I, though we seldom meet, were an *alter idem* on this memorable occasion, and had not an idea that we did not candidly impart; and "so carelessly did we fleet the time," that I wish no better, when there is another fight, than to have him for a companion on my journey down, and to return with my friend Jack Pigott, talking of what was to happen or of what did happen, with a noble subject always at hand, and liberty to digress to others whenever they offered. Indeed, on my repeating the lines from Spenser in an involuntary fit of enthusiasm,

"What more felicity can fall to creature,
Than to enjoy delight with liberty?"

my last-named ingenious friend stopped me by saying that this, translated into the vulgate, meant "*Going to see a fight.*"

Jo. Toms and I could not settle about the method of going down. He said there was a caravan, he understood, to start from Tom Belcher's at two, which would go there *right out* and back again the next day. Now I never travel all night, and said I should get a cast to Newbury by one of the mails. Jo. swore the thing was impossible, and I could only answer that I had made up my mind to it. In short, he seemed to me to

waver, said he only came to see if I was going, had letters to write, a cause coming on the day after, and faintly said at parting (for I was bent on setting out that moment) — "Well, we meet at Philippi!" I made the best of my way to Piccadilly. The mail coach stand was bare. "They are all gone," said I — "this is always the way with me — in the instant I lose the future — if I had not stayed to pour out that last cup of tea, I should have been just in time" — and cursing my folly and ill-luck together, without inquiring at the coach-office whether the mails were gone or not, I walked on in despite, and to punish my own dilatoriness and want of determination. At any rate, I would not turn back: I might get to Hounslow, or perhaps farther, to be on my road the next morning. I passed Hyde Park Corner (my Rubicon), and trusted to fortune. Suddenly I heard the clattering of a Brentford stage, and the fight rushed full upon my fancy. I argued (not unwisely) that even a Brentford coachman was better company than my own thoughts (such as they were just then), and at his invitation mounted the box with him. I immediately stated my case to him — namely, my quarrel with myself for missing the Bath or Bristol mail, and my determination to get on in consequence as well as I could, without any disparagement or insulting comparison between longer or shorter stages. It is a maxim with me that stage-coaches, and consequently stage-coachmen, are respectable in proportion to the distance they have to travel: so I said nothing on that subject to my Brentford friend. Any incipient tendency to an abstract proposition, or (as he might have construed it) to a personal reflection of this kind, was however nipped in the bud; for I had no sooner declared indignantly that I had missed the mails, than he flatly denied that they were gone along, and lo! at the instant three of them drove by in rapid, provoking, orderly succession, as if they would devour the ground before them. Here again I seemed in the contradictory situation of the man in Dryden who exclaims,

"I follow Fate, which does too hard pursue!"

If I had stopped to inquire at the White Horse Cellar, which would not have taken me a minute, I should now have been driving down the road in all the dignified unconcern and *ideal* perfection of mechanical conveyance. The Bath mail I had set my mind upon, and I had missed it, as I missed every

thing else, by my own absurdity, in putting the will for the deed, and aiming at ends without employing means. "Sir," said he of the Brentford, "the Bath mail will be up presently, my brother-in-law drives it, and I will engage to stop him if there is a place empty." I almost doubted my good genius; but, sure enough, up it drove like lightning, and stopped directly at the call of the Brentford Jehu. I would not have believed this possible, but the brother-in-law of a mail-coach driver is himself no mean man. I was transferred without loss of time from the top of one coach to that of the other, desired the guard to pay my fare to the Brentford coachman for me as I had no change, was accommodated with a great coat, put up my umbrella to keep off a drizzling mist, and we began to cut through the air like an arrow. The mile-stones disappeared one after another, the rain kept off; Tom Turtle,¹ the trainer, sat before me on the coach-box, with whom I exchanged civilities as a gentleman going to the fight; the passion that had transported me an hour before was subdued to pensive regret and conjectural musing on the next day's battle; I was promised a place inside at Reading, and upon the whole, I thought myself a lucky fellow. Such is the force of imagination! On the outside of any other coach on the 10th of December, with a Scotch mist drizzling through the cloudy moonlight air, I should have been cold, comfortless, impatient, and, no doubt, wet through; but seated on the Royal mail, I felt warm and comfortable, the air did me good, the ride did me good, I was pleased with the progress we had made, and confident that all would go well through the journey. When I got inside at Reading, I found Turtle and a stout valetudinarian, whose costume bespoke him one of the Fancy, and who had risen from a three months' sick bed to get into the mail to see the fight. They were intimate, and we fell into a lively discourse. My friend the trainer was confined in his topics to fighting dogs and men, to bears and badgers; beyond this he was "quite chap-fallen," had not a word to throw at a dog, or indeed very wisely fell asleep, when any other game was started. The whole art of training (I, however, learnt from him), consists in two things, exercise and abstinence, abstinence and exercise, repeated alternately and without end. A yolk of an egg with a spoonful of rum in it is the first thing in a morning, and then a walk of six miles till breakfast.

This meal consists of a plentiful supply of tea and toast and beefsteaks. Then another six or seven miles till dinner-time, and another supply of solid beef or mutton with a pint of porter, and perhaps, at the utmost, a couple of glasses of sherry. Martin trains on water, but this increases his infirmity on another very dangerous side. The Gas-man takes now and then a chirping glass (under the rose) to console him, during a six weeks' probation, for the absence of Mrs. Hickman — an agreeable woman, with (I understand) a pretty fortune of two hundred pounds. How matter presses on me! What stubborn things are facts! How inexhaustible is nature and art! "It is well," as I once heard Mr. Richmond observe, "to see a variety." He was speaking of cockfighting as an edifying spectacle. I cannot deny but that one learns more of what *is* (I do not say of what *ought to be*) in this desultory mode of practical study, than from reading the same book twice over, even though it should be a moral treatise. Where was I? I was sitting at dinner with the candidate for the honors of the ring, "where good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both." Then follows an hour of social chat and native glee; and afterwards, to another breathing over heathy hill or dale. Back to supper, and then to bed, and up by six again — Our hero

"Follows so the ever-running sun
With profitable *ardor*" —

to the day that brings him victory or defeat in the green fairy circle. Is not this life more sweet than mine? I was going to say; but I will not libel any life by comparing it to mine, which is (at the date of these presents) bitter as colocintida and the dregs of aconitum!

The invalid in the Bath mail soared a pitch above the trainer, and did not sleep so sound, because he had "more figures and more fantasies." We talked the hours away merrily. He had faith in surgery, for he had had three ribs set right, that had been broken in a *turn-up* at Belcher's, but thought physicians old women, for they had no antidote in their catalogue for brandy. An indigestion is an excellent common-place for two people that never met before. By way of ingratiating myself, I told him the story of my doctor, who, on my earnestly representing to him that I thought his regimen had done me harm, assured me that the whole pharmacopeia contained nothing comparable to the prescription he had given me; and, as a proof

¹ John Thurtell, to wit. (Hazlitt's note.)

of its undoubted efficacy, said, that, "he had had one gentleman with my complaint under his hands for the last fifteen years." This anecdote made my companion shake the rough sides of his three great coats with boisterous laughter; and Turtle, starting out of his sleep, swore he knew how the fight would go, for he had had a dream about it. Sure enough the rascal told us how the three first rounds went off, but "his dream," like others, "denoted a foregone conclusion." He knew his men. The moon now rose in silver state, and I ventured, with some hesitation, to point out this object of placid beauty, with the blue serene beyond, to the man of science, to which his ear he "seriously inclined," the more as it gave promise *d'un beau jour* for the morrow, and showed the ring undrenched by envious showers, arrayed in sunny smiles. Just then, all going on well, I thought on my friend Toms, whom I had left behind, and said innocently, "There was a blockhead of a fellow I left in town, who said there was no possibility of getting down by the mail, and talked of going by a caravan from Belcher's at two in the morning, after he had written some letters." "Why," said he of the lapells, "I should not wonder if that was the very person we saw running about like mad from one coach-door to another, and asking if any one had seen a friend of his, a gentleman going to the fight, whom he had missed stupidly enough by staying to write a note." "Pray, Sir," said my fellow-traveller, "had he a plaid-cloak on?" — "Why, no," said I, "not at the time I left him, but he very well might afterwards, for he offered to lend me one." The plaid-cloak and the letter decided the thing. Joe, sure enough, was in the Bristol mail, which preceded us by about fifty yards. This was droll enough. We had now but a few miles to our place of destination, and the first thing I did on alighting at Newbury, both coaches stopping at the same time, was to call out, "Pray, is there a gentleman in that mail of the name of Toms?" "No," said Joe, borrowing something of the vein of Gilpin, "for I have just got out." "Well!" says he, "this is lucky; but you don't know how vexed I was to miss you; for," added he, lowering his voice, "do you know when I left you I went to Belcher's to ask about the caravan, and Mrs. Belcher said very obligingly, she couldn't tell about that, but there were two gentlemen who had taken places by the mail and were gone on in a landau, and she could frank us. It's a pity I didn't meet with you;

we could then have got down for nothing. But *mum's the word*." It's the devil for any one to tell me a secret, for it's sure to come out in print. I do not care so much to gratify a friend, but the public ear is too great a temptation to me.

Our present business was to get beds and a supper at an inn; but this was no easy task. The public-houses were full, and where you saw a light at a private house, and people poking their heads out of the casement to see what was going on, they instantly put them in and shut the window, the moment you seemed advancing with a suspicious overture for accommodation. Our guard and coachman thundered away at the outer gate of the Crown for some time without effect — such was the greater noise within; — and when the doors were unbarred, and we got admittance, we found a party assembled in the kitchen round a good hospitable fire, some sleeping, others drinking, others talking on politics and on the fight. A tall English yeoman (something like Matthews in the face, and quite as great a wag) —

"A lusty man to ben an abbot able," —

was making such a prodigious noise about rent and taxes, and the price of corn now and formerly, that he had prevented us from being heard at the gate. The first thing I heard him say was to a shuffling fellow who wanted to be off a bet for a shilling glass of brandy and water — "Confound it, man, don't be *insipid*!" Thinks I, that is a good phrase. It was a good omen. He kept it up so all night, nor flinched with the approach of morning. He was a fine fellow, with sense, wit, and spirit, a hearty body and a joyous mind, free-spoken, frank, convivial — one of that true English breed that went with Harry the Fifth to the siege of Harfleur — "standing like greyhounds in the slips," &c. We ordered tea and eggs (beds were soon found to be out of the question) and this fellow's conversation was *sauce piquante*. It did one's heart good to see him brandish his oaken towel and to hear him talk. He made mince-meat of a drunken, stupid, red-face, quarrelsome, *frowsy* farmer, whose nose "he moralized into a thousand similies," making it out a firebrand like Bardolph's.¹ "I'll tell you what my friend," says he, "the landlady has only to keep you here to save fire and candle. If one was to touch your nose, it would go off like a piece of charcoal." At this the other only grinned like an idiot,

¹ In Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.

the sole variety in his purple face being his little peering grey eyes and yellow teeth; called for another glass, swore he would not stand it; and after many attempts to provoke his humorous antagonist to single combat, which the other turned off (after working him up to a ludicrous pitch of choler) with great adroitness, he fell quietly asleep with a glass of liquor in his hand, which he could not lift to his head. His laughing persecutor made a speech over him, and turning to the opposite side of the room, where they were all sleeping in the midst of this "loud and furious fun," said, "There's a scene, by G—d, for Hogarth to paint. I think he and Shakespeare were our two best men at copying life." This confirmed me in my good opinion of him. Hogarth, Shakespeare, and Nature, were just enough for him (indeed for any man) to know. I said, "You read Cobbett; don't you?" At least," says I, "you talk just as well as he writes." He seemed to doubt this. But I said, "We have an hour to spare: if you'll get pen, ink, and paper, and keep on talking, I'll write down what you say; and if it doesn't make a capital *Political Register*,¹ I'll forfeit my head. You have kept me alive to-night, however. I don't know what I should have done without you." He did not dislike this view of the thing, nor my asking if he was not about the size of Jem Belcher; and told me soon afterwards, in the confidence of friendship, that "the circumstance which had given him nearly the greatest concern in his life, was Cribb's beating Jem after he had lost his eye by racket-playing." — The morning dawns; that dim but yet clear light appears, which weighs like solid bars of metal on the sleepless eyelids; the guests drop down from their chambers one by one — but it was too late to think of going to bed now (the clock was on the stroke of seven), we had nothing for it but to find a barber's (the pole that glittered in the morning sun lighted us to his shop), and then a nine miles march to Hungerford. The day was fine, the sky was blue, the mists were retiring from the marshy ground, the path was tolerably dry, the sitting-up all night had not done us much harm — at least the cause was good; we talked of this and that with amicable difference, roving and sipping of many subjects, but still invariably we returned to the fight. At length, a mile to the left of Hungerford, on a gentle eminence, we saw the ring surrounded by covered carts, gigs, and carriages, of which hundreds had

passed us on the road; Toms gave a youthful shout, and we hastened down a narrow lane to the scene of action.

Reader, have you ever seen a fight? If not, you have a pleasure to come, at least if it is a fight like that between the Gas-man and Bill Neate. The crowd was very great when we arrived on the spot; open carriages were coming up, with streamers flying and music playing, and the country-people were pouring in over hedge and ditch in all directions, to see their hero beat or be beaten. The odds were still on Gas, but only about five to four. Gully had been down to try Neate, and had backed him considerably, which was a damper to the sanguine confidence of the adverse party. About two hundred thousand pounds were pending. The Gas says, he has lost three thousand pounds which were promised him by different gentlemen if he had won. He had presumed too much on himself, which had made others presume on him. This spirited and formidable young fellow seems to have taken for his motto the old maxim, that "there are three things necessary to success in life — *Impudence! Impudence! Impudence!*" It is so in matters of opinion, but not in the *Fancy*, which is the most practical of all things, though even here confidence is half the battle, but only half. Our friend had vaped and swaggered too much, as if he wanted to grin and bully his adversary out of the fight. "Alas! the Bristol man was not so tamed!" — "This is *the grave-digger*" (would Tom Hickman exclaim in the moments of intoxication from gin and success, shewing his tremendous right hand), "this will send many of them to their long homes; I haven't done with them yet!" Why should he — though he had licked four of the best men within the hour, yet why should he threaten to inflict dishonorable chastisement on my old master Richmond, a veteran going off the stage, and who has borne his sable honors meekly? Magnanimity, by dear Tom, and bravery, should be inseparable. Or why should he go up to his antagonist, the first time he ever saw him at the Fives Court, and measuring him from head to foot with a glance of contempt, as Achilles surveyed Hector, say to him, "What, are you Bill Neate? I'll knock more blood out of that great carcase of thine, this day fortnight, than you ever knock'd out of a bullock's!" It was not manly, 'twas not fighter-like. If he was sure of the victory (as he was not), the less said about it the

¹ A periodical published by William Cobbett.

better. Modesty should accompany the *Fancy* as its shadow. The best men were always the best behaved. Jem Belcher, the Game Chicken (before whom the Gas-man could not have lived) were civil, silent men. So is Cribb, so is Tom Belcher, the most elegant of sparrers, and not a man for every one to take by the nose. I enlarged on this topic in the mail (while Turtle was asleep), and said very wisely (as I thought) that impertinence was a part of no profession. A boxer was bound to beat his man, but not to thrust his fist, either actually or by implication, in every one's face. Even a highwayman, in the way of trade, may blow out your brains, but if he uses foul language at the same time, I should say he was no gentleman. A boxer, I would infer, need not be a black-guard or a coxcomb, more than another. Perhaps I pressed this point too much on a fallen man — Mr. Thomas Hickman has by this time learnt that first of all lessons, "That man was made to mourn." He has lost nothing by the late fight but his presumption; and that every man may do as well without! By an over-display of this quality, however, the public had been prejudiced against him, and the *knowing-ones* were taken in. Few but those who had bet on him wished Gas to win. With my own prepossessions on the subject, the result of the 11th of December appeared to me as fine a piece of poetical justice as I had ever witnessed. The difference of weight between the two combatants (14 stone to 12) was nothing to the sporting men. Great, heavy, clumsy, long-armed Bill Neate kicked the beam in the scale of the Gas-man's vanity. The amateurs were frightened at his big words, and thought that they would make up for the difference of six feet and five feet nine. Truly, the *Fancy* are not men of imagination. They judge of what has been, and cannot conceive of any thing that is to be. The Gas-man had won hitherto; therefore he must beat a man half as big again as himself — and that to a certainty. Besides, there are as many feuds, factions, prejudices, pedantic notions in the *Fancy* as in the state or in the schools. Mr. Gully is almost the only cool, sensible man among them, who exercises an unbiassed discretion, and is not a slave to his passions in these matters. But enough of reflections, and to our tale. The day, as I have said, was fine for a December morning. The grass was wet, and the ground miry, and ploughed up with multitudinous feet, except that, within the ring itself, there was a spot

of virgin-green closed in and unprofaned by vulgar tread, that shone with dazzling brightness in the mid-day sun. For it was now noon, and we had an hour to wait. This is the trying time. It is then the heart sickens, as you think what the two champions are about, and how short a time will determine their fate. After the first blow is struck, there is no opportunity for nervous apprehensions; you are swallowed up in the immediate interest of the scene — but

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream."

I found it so as I felt the sun's rays clinging to my back, and saw the white wintry clouds sink below the verge of the horizon. "So, I thought, my fairest hopes have faded from my sight! — so will the Gas-man's glory, or that of his adversary, vanish in an hour." The *swells* were parading in their white box-coats, the outer ring was cleared with some bruises on the heads and shins of the rustic assembly (for the *cockneys* had been distanced by the sixty-six miles); the time drew near, I had got a good stand; a bustle, a buzz, ran through the crowd, and from the opposite side entered Neate, between his second and bottle-holder. He rolled along, swathed in his loose great coat, his knock-knees bending under his huge bulk; and, with a modest cheerful air, threw his hat into the ring. He then just looked round, and began quietly to undress; when from the other side there was a similar rush and an opening made, and the Gas-man came forward with a conscious air of anticipated triumph, too much like the cock-of-the-walk. He strutted about more than became a hero, sucked oranges with a supercilious air, and threw away the skin with a toss of his head, and went up and looked at Neate, which was an act of supererogation. The only sensible thing he did was, as he strode away from the modern Ajax, to fling out his arms, as if he wanted to try whether they would do their work that day. By this time they had stripped, and presented a strong contrast in appearance. If Neate was like Ajax, "with Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear" the pugilistic reputation of all Bristol, Hickman might be compared to Diomed, light, vigorous, elastic, and his back glistened in the sun, as he moved about, like a panther's hide. There was now a dead pause — attention was awe-struck. Who at that moment, big with a great event, did not draw his breath short — did not feel

his heart throb? All was ready. They tossed up for the sun, and the Gas-man won. They were led up to the *scratch* — shook hands, and went at it.

In the first round every one thought it was all over. After making play a short time, the Gas-man flew at his adversary like a tiger, struck five blows in as many seconds, three first, and then following him as he staggered back, two more, right and left, and down he fell, a mighty ruin. There was a shout, and I said, "There is no standing this." Neate seemed like a lifeless lump of flesh and bone, round which the Gas-man's blows played with the rapidity of electricity or lightning, and you imagined he would only be lifted up to be knocked down again. It was as if Hickman held a sword or a fire in that right hand of his, and directed it against an unarmed body. They met again, and Neate seemed, not cowed, but particularly cautious. I saw his teeth clenched together and his brows knit close against the sun. He held out both his arms at full length straight before him, like two sledgehammers, and raised his left an inch or two higher. The Gas-man could not get over this guard — they struck mutually and fell, but without advantage on either side. It was the same in the next round; but the balance of power was thus restored — the fate of the battle was suspended. No one could tell how it would end. This was the only moment in which opinion was divided; for, in the next, the Gas-man aiming a mortal blow at his adversary's neck, with his right hand, and failing from the length he had to reach, the other returned it with his left at full swing, planted a tremendous blow on his cheek-bone and eyebrow, and made a red ruin of that side of his face. The Gas-man went down, and there was another shout — a roar of triumph as the waves of fortune rolled tumultuously from side to side. This was a settler. Hickman got up, and "grinned horrible a ghastly smile," yet he was evidently dashed in his opinion of himself; it was the first time he had ever been so punished; all one side of his face was perfect scarlet, and his right eye was closed in dingy blackness, as he advanced to the fight, less confident, but still determined. After one or two rounds, not receiving another such remembrancer, he rallied and went at it with his former impetuosity. But in vain. His strength had been weakened, — his blows could not tell at such a distance, — he was obliged to fling himself at his adversary, and could not strike from his

feet; and almost as regularly as he flew at him with his right hand, Neate warded the blow, or drew back out of its reach, and felled him with the return of his left. There was little cautious sparring — no half-hits — no tapping and trifling, none of the *petit-maitreship* of the art — they were almost all knock-down blows: — the fight was a good stand-up fight. The wonder was the half-minute time. If there had been a minute or more allowed between each round, it would have been intelligible how they should by degrees recover strength and resolution; but to see two men smashed to the ground, smeared with gore, stunned, senseless, the breath beaten out of their bodies; and then, before you recover from the shock, to see them rise up with new strength and courage, stand steady to inflict or receive mortal offense, and rush upon each other "like two clouds over the Caspian" — this is the most astonishing thing of all: — this is the high and heroic state of man! From this time forward the event became more certain every round; and about the twelfth it seemed as if it must have been over. Hickman generally stood with his back to me; but in the scuffle, he had changed positions, and Neate just then made a tremendous lunge at him, and hit him full in the face. It was doubtful whether he would fall backwards or forwards; he hung suspended for a second or two, and then fell back, throwing his hands in the air, and with his face lifted up to the sky. I never saw any thing more terrific than his aspect just before he fell. All traces of life, of natural expression, were gone from him. His face was like a human skull, a death's head, spouting blood. The eyes were filled with blood, the nose streamed with blood, the mouth gaped blood. He was not like an actual man, but like a preternatural, spectral appearance, or like one of the figures in Dante's *Inferno*. Yet he fought on after this for several rounds, still striking the first desperate blow, and Neate standing on the defensive, and using the same cautious guard to the last, as if he had still all his work to do; and it was not till the Gas-man was so stunned in the seventeenth or eighteenth round, that his senses forsook him, and he could not come to time, that the battle was declared over.¹ Ye who despise the Fancy,

¹ Scroggins said of the Gas-man, that he thought he was a man of that courage, that if his hands were cut off, he would still fight on with the stumps — like that of Widrigton, — "in doleful dumps,

Who, when his legs were smitten off
Still fought upon his stumps."

(Hazlitt's note.)

do something to shew as much *pluck*, or as much self-possession as this, before you assume a superiority which you have never given a single proof of by any one action in the whole course of your lives! — When the Gas-man came to himself, the first words he uttered were, “Where am I? What is the matter?” “Nothing is the matter, Tom, — you have lost the battle, but you are the bravest man alive.” And Jackson whispered to him, “I am collecting a purse for you, Tom.” — Vain sounds, and unheard at that moment! Neate instantly went up and shook him cordially by the hand, and seeing some old acquaintance, began to flourish with his fists, calling out, “Ah you always said I couldn’t fight — What do you think now?” But all in good humor, and without any appearance of arrogance; only it was evident Bill Neate was pleased that he had won the fight. When it was over, I asked Cribb if he did not think it was a good one? He said, “*Pretty well!*” The carrier-pigeons now mounted into the air, and one of them flew with the news of her husband’s victory to the bosom of Mrs. Neate. Alas, for Mrs. Hickman!

Mais au revoir, as Sir Fopling Flutter says. I went down with Toms; I returned with Jack Pigott, whom I met on the ground. Toms is a rattle brain; Pigott is a sentimentalist. Now, under favor, I am a sentimentalist too — therefore I say nothing, but that the interest of the excursion did not flag as I came back. Pigott and I marched along the causeway leading from Hungerford to Newbury, now observing the effect of a brilliant sun on the tawny meads or moss-colored cottages, now exulting in the fight, now digressing to some topic of general and elegant literature. My friend was dressed in character for the occasion, or like one of the *Fancy*; that is, with a double portion of great coats, clogs, and overhauls: and just as we had agreed with a couple of country-lads to carry his superfluous wearing-apparel to the next town, we were overtaken by a return post-chaise, into which I got, Pigott preferring a seat on the bar. There were two strangers already in the chaise, and on their observing they supposed I had been to the fight, I said I had, and concluded they had done the same. They appeared, however, a little shy and sore on the subject; and it was not till after several hints dropped, and questions put, that it turned out that they had missed it. One of these friends had undertaken to drive the other there in his gig; they

had set out, to make sure work, the day before at three in the afternoon. The owner of the one-horse vehicle scorned to ask his way, and drove right on to Bagshot, instead of turning off at Hounslow: there they stopped all night, and set off the next day across the country to Reading, from whence they took coach, and got down within a mile or two of Hungerford, just half an hour after the fight was over. This might be safely set down as one of the miseries of human life. We parted with these two gentlemen who had been to see the fight, but had returned as they went, at Wolhampton, where we were promised beds (an irresistible temptation, for Pigott had passed the preceding night at Hungerford as we had done at Newbury), and we turned into an old bow-windowed parlor with a carpet and a snug fire; and after devouring a quantity of tea, toast, and eggs, sat down to consider, during an hour of philosophic leisure, what we should have for supper. In the midst of an Epicurean deliberation between a roasted fowl and mutton chops with mashed potatoes, we were interrupted by an inroad of Goths and Vandals — *O procul este profani* — not real flash-men, but interlopers, noisy pretenders, butchers from Tothill-fields, brokers from White-chapel, who called immediately for pipes and tobacco, hoping it would not be disagreeable to the gentlemen, and began to insist that it was a *cross*. Pigott withdrew from the smoke and noise into another room, and left me to dispute the point with them for a couple of hours *sans intermission* by the dial. The next morning we rose refreshed; and on observing that Jack had a pocket volume in his hand, in which he read in the intervals of our discourse, I inquired what it was, and learned to my particular satisfaction that it was a volume of the *New Eloise*. Ladies, after this, will you contend that a love for the *Fancy* is incompatible with the cultivation of sentiment? — We jogged on as before, my friend setting me up in a genteel drab great coat and green silk handkerchief (which I must say became me exceedingly), and after stretching our legs for a few miles, and seeing Jack Randall, Ned Turner, and Scroggins, pass on the top of one of the Bath coaches, we engaged with the driver of the second to take us to London for the usual fee. I got inside, and found three other passengers. One of them was an old gentleman with an aquiline nose, powdered hair, and a pigtail, and who looked as if he had played many a rubber at the Bath rooms. I said to myself,

he is very like Mr. Windham. I wish he would enter into conversation, that I might hear what fine observations would come from those finely-turned features. However, nothing passed, till, stopping to dine at Reading, some inquiry was made by the company about the fight, and I gave (as the reader may believe) an eloquent and animated description of it. When we got into the coach again, the old gentleman, after a graceful exordium, said, he had, when a boy, been to a fight between the famous Broughton and George Stevenson, who was called the *Fighting Coachman*, in the year 1770, with the late Mr. Windham. This beginning flattered the spirit of prophecy within me and rivetted my attention. He went on — “George Stevenson was coachman to a friend of my father’s. He was an old man when I saw him some years afterwards. He took hold of his own arm and said, ‘there was muscle here once, but now it is no more than this young gentleman’s.’ He added, ‘well, no matter; I have been here long, I am willing to go hence, and I hope I have done no more harm than another man.’ Once,” said my unknown companion, “I asked him if he had ever beat Broughton? He said Yes; that he had fought with him three times, and the last time he fairly beat him, though the world did not allow it. ‘I’ll tell you how it was, master. When the seconds lifted us up in the last round, we were so exhausted that neither of us could stand, and we fell upon one another, and as Master Broughton fell uppermost, the mob gave it in his favor, and he was said to have won the battle. But,’ says he, ‘the fact was, that as his second (John Cuthbert) lifted him up, he said to him, ‘I’ll fight no more, I’ve had enough;’ which,” says Stevenson, ‘you know gave me the victory. And to prove to you that this was the case, when John Cuthbert was on his death-bed, and they asked him if there was any thing on his mind which he wished to confess, he answered, “Yes, that there was one thing he wished to set right, for that certainly Master Stevenson won that last fight with Master Broughton; for he whispered him as he lifted him up in the last round of all, that he had had enough.”’ This,” said the Bath gentleman, “was a bit of human nature;” and I have written this account of the fight on purpose that it might not be lost to the world. He also stated as a proof of the candor of mind in this class of men, that Stevenson acknowledged that Broughton

could have beat him in his best day; but that he (Broughton) was getting old in their last encounter. When we stopped in Piccadilly, I wanted to ask the gentleman some questions about the late Mr. Windham, but had not courage. I got out, resigned my coat and green silk handkerchief to Pigott (loth to part with these ornaments of life), and walked home in high spirits.

P.S. Toms called upon me the next day, to ask me if I did not think the fight was a complete thing? I said I thought it was. I hope he will relish my account of it.

A FAREWELL TO ESSAY-WRITING

Written at Winterslow. Published in the *London Weekly Review* for March 29, 1828. The essay reflects Hazlitt’s temperament, his interest in life, and his relations with his friends, Lamb and Leigh Hunt. The latter was editor of the *Examiner*, in which many of Hazlitt’s essays were published.

“This life is best, if quiet life is best.”

Food, warmth, sleep, and a book; these are all I at present ask — the *ultima Thule*¹ of my wandering desires. Do you not then wish for

“A friend in your retreat,
Whom you may whisper, solitude is sweet?”

Expected, well enough: — gone, still better. Such attractions are strengthened by distance. Nor a mistress? “Beautiful mask! I know thee!” When I can judge of the heart from the face, of the thoughts from the lips, I may again trust myself. Instead of these give me the robin redbreast, pecking the crumbs at the door, or warbling on the leafless spray, the same glancing form that has followed me wherever I have been, and “done its spiriting gently;” or the rich notes of the thrush that startle the ear of winter, and seem to have drunk up the full draught of joy from the very sense of contrast. To these I adhere, and am faithful, for they are true to me; and, dear in themselves, are dearer for the sake of what is departed, leading me back (by the hand) to that dreaming world, in the innocence of which they sat and made sweet music, waking the promise of future years, and answered by the eager throbbings of my own breast. But now “the credulous hope of mutual minds is o’er,” and I turn back from the world that has deceived me, to nature that lent it a false beauty, and that keeps up

1 Farthest north.

the illusion of the past. As I quaff my libations of tea in a morning, I love to watch the clouds sailing from the west, and fancy that "the spring comes slowly up this way." In this hope, while "fields are dank and ways are mire," I follow the same direction to a neighboring wood, where, having gained the dry, level greensward, I can see my way for a mile before me, closed in on each side by copse-wood, and ending in a point of light more or less brilliant, as the day is bright or cloudy. What a walk is this to me! I have no need of book or companion — the days, the hours, the thoughts of my youth are at my side, and blend with the air that fans my cheek. Here I can saunter for hours, bending my eye forward, stopping and turning to look back, thinking to strike off into some less trodden path, yet hesitating to quit the one I am in, afraid to snap the brittle threads of memory. I remark the shining trunks and slender branches of the birch trees, waving in the idle breeze; or a pheasant springs up on whirring wing; or I recall the spot where I once found a wood-pigeon at the foot of a tree, weltering in its gore, and think how many seasons have flown since "it left its little life in air." Dates, names, faces come back — to what purpose? Or why think of them now? Or rather why not think of them oftener? We walk through life, as through a narrow path, with a thin curtain drawn around it; behind are ranged rich portraits, airy harps are strung — yet we will not stretch forth our hands and lift aside the veil, to catch glimpses of the one, or sweep the chords of the other. As in a theatre, when the old-fashioned green curtain drew up, groups of figures, fantastic dresses, laughing faces, rich banquets, stately columns, gleaming vistas appeared beyond; so we have only at any time to "peep through the blanket of the past," to possess ourselves at once of all that has regaled our senses, that is stored up in our memory, that has struck our fancy, that has pierced our hearts: — yet to all this we are indifferent, insensible, and seem intent only on the present vexation, the future disappointment. If there is a Titian hanging up in the room with me, I scarcely regard it: how then should I be expected to strain the mental eye so far, or to throw down, by the magic spells of the will, the stone-walls that enclose it in the Louvre? There is one head there of which I have often thought, when looking at it, that nothing should ever disturb me again, and I would become the character it represents — such per-

fect calmness and self possession reigns in it! Why do I not hang an image of this in some dusky corner of my brain, and turn an eye upon it ever and anon, as I have need of some such talisman to calm my troubled thoughts? The attempt is fruitless, if not natural; or, like that of the French, to hang garlands on the grave, and to conjure back the dead by miniature pictures of them while living! It is only some actual coincidence or local association that tends, without violence, to "open all the cells where memory slept." I can easily, by stooping over the long-spent grass and clay cold clod, recall the tufts of primroses, or purple hyacinths, that formerly grew on the same spot, and cover the bushes with leaves and singing-birds, as they were eighteen summers ago; or prolonging my walk and hearing the sighing gale rustle through a tall, straight wood at the end of it, can fancy that I distinguish the cry of hounds, and the fatal group issuing from it, as in the tale of *Theodore and Honoria*.¹ A moaning gust of wind aids the belief; I look once more to see whether the trees before me answer to the idea of the horror-stricken grove, and an air-built city towers over their grey tops.

"Of all the cities in Romanian lands,
The chief and most renown'd Ravenna stands."

I return home resolved to read the entire poem through, and, after dinner, drawing my chair to the fire, and holding a small print close to my eyes, launch into the full tide of Dryden's couplets (a stream of sound), comparing his didactic and descriptive pomp with the simple pathos and picturesque truth of Boccaccio's story, and tasting with a pleasure, which none but an habitual reader can feel, some quaint examples of pronunciation in this accomplished versifier.

"Which when Honoria viewed,
The fresh impulse her former fright renew'd."
(*Theodore and Honoria*.)

"And made th' insult, which in his grief appears,
The means to mourn thee with my pious tears."
(*Sigismonde and Guiscardo*.)

These trifling instances of the wavering and unsettled state of the language give double effect to the firm and stately march of the verse, and make me dwell with a sort of tender interest on the difficulties and doubts of an earlier period of literature. They pronounced words then in a manner which we should laugh at now; and they wrote verse in a manner which we can do anything but

¹ Dryden's version of a story from Boccaccio.

laugh at. The pride of a new acquisition seems to give fresh confidence to it; to impel the rolling syllables through the molds provided for them, and to overflow the envious bounds of rhyme into time-honored triplets. I am much pleased with Leigh Hunt's mention of Moore's involuntary admiration of Dryden's free, unshackled verse, and of his repeating *con amore*,¹ and with an Irish spirit and accent, the fine lines —

"Let honor and preferment go for gold.
But glorious beauty isn't to be sold."

What sometimes surprises me in looking back to the past is, with the exception already stated, to find myself so little changed in the time. The same images and trains of thought stick by me: I have the same tastes, likings, sentiments, and wishes that I had then. One great ground of confidence and support has, indeed, been struck from under my feet; but I have made it up to myself by proportionable pertinacity of opinion. The success of the great cause,² to which I had vowed myself, was to me more than all the world: I had a strength in its strength, a resource which I knew not of, till it failed me for the second time.

"Fall'n was Glenartny's stately tree!
Oh! ne'er to see Lord Ronald more!"

It was not till I saw the axe laid to the root that I found the full extent of what I had to lose and suffer. But my conviction of the right was only established by the triumph of the wrong; and my earliest hopes will be my last regrets. One source of this unbendingness (which some may call obstinacy) is that, though living much alone, I have never worshipped the Echo. I see plainly enough that black is not white, that the grass is green, that kings are not their subjects; and, in such self-evident cases, do not think it necessary to collate my opinions with the received prejudices. In subtler questions, and matters that admit of doubt, as I do not impose my opinion on others without a reason, so I will not give up mine to them without a better reason; and a person calling me names, or giving himself airs of authority, does not convince me of his having taken more pains to find out the truth than I have, but the contrary. Mr. Gifford³ once said, that "while I was sitting over my gin and tobacco-pipes, I fancied my-

self a Leibnitz." He did not so much as know that I had ever read a metaphysical book: — was I, therefore, out of complaisance or deference to him, to forget whether I had or not? I am rather disappointed, both on my own account and his, that Mr. Hunt has missed the opportunity of explaining the character of a friend as clearly as he might have done. He is puzzled to reconcile the shyness of my pretensions with the inveteracy and sturdiness of my principles. I should have thought they were nearly the same thing. Both from disposition and habit, I can *assume* nothing in word, look, or manner. I cannot steal a march upon public opinion in any way. My standing upright, speaking loud, entering a room gracefully, proves nothing; therefore I neglect these ordinary means of recommending myself to the good graces and admiration of strangers (and, as it appears, even of philosophers and friends). Why? Because I have other resources, or, at least, am absorbed in other studies and pursuits. Suppose this absorption to be extreme, and even morbid — that I have brooded over an idea till it has become a kind of substance in my brain, that I have reasons for a thing which I have found out with much labor and pains, and to which I can scarcely do justice without the utmost violence of exertion (and that only to a few persons) — is this a reason for my playing off my out-of-the-way notions in all companies, wearing a prim and self-complacent air, as if I were "the admired of all observers?" or is it not rather an argument (together with a want of animal spirits), why I should retire into myself, and perhaps acquire a nervous and uneasy look, from a consciousness of the disproportion between the interest and conviction I feel on certain subjects, and my ability to communicate what weighs upon my own mind to others? If my ideas, which I do not avouch, but suppose, lie below the surface, why am I to be always attempting to dazzle superficial people with them, or smiling, delighted, at my own want of success? What I have here stated is only the excess of the common and well-known English and scholastic character. I am neither a buffoon, a fop, nor a Frenchman, which Mr. Hunt would have me to be. He finds it odd that I am a close reasoner and a loose dresser. I have been (among other follies) a hard liver as well as a hard thinker; and the consequences of that will not allow me to dress as I please. People in real life are not like players on a stage, who put on a certain look

¹ with delight.

² The cause of liberty, typified by the French Revolution.

³ William Gifford, Editor of the *Quarterly Review* (Tory) and a bitter enemy of Hazlitt.

or costume, merely for effect. I am aware, indeed, that the gay and airy pen of the author does not seriously probe the errors or misfortunes of his friends — he only glances at their seeming peculiarities, so as to make them odd and ridiculous; for which forbearance few of them will thank him. Why does he assert that I was vain of my hair when it was black, and am equally vain of it now it is grey, when this is true in neither case? This transposition of motives makes me almost doubt whether Lord Byron was thinking so much of the rings on his fingers as his biographer was.¹ These sort of criticisms should be left to women. I am made to wear a little hat, stuck on the top of my head the wrong way. Nay, I commonly wear a large slouching hat over my eyebrows; and if ever I had another, I must have twisted it about in any shape to get rid of the annoyance. This probably tickled Mr. Hunt's fancy and retains possession of it, to the exclusion of the obvious truism that I naturally wear "a melancholy hat."

I am charged with using strange gestures and contortions of features in argument, in order to "look energetic." One would rather suppose that the heat of the argument produces the extravagance of the gestures, as I am said to be calm at other times. It is like saying that a man in a passion clenches his teeth, not because he is, but in order to seem, angry. Why should everything be construed into air and affectation? With Hamlet, I may say, "I know not *seems*."

Again, my old friend and pleasant "Companion" remarks it, as an anomaly in my character, that I crawl about the fives-court like a cripple till I get the racket in my hand, when I start up as if I was possessed with a devil. I have then a motive for exertion; I lie by for difficulties and extreme cases. *Aut Cæsar aut nullus*. I have no notion of doing nothing with an air of importance, nor should I ever take a liking to the game of battledore and shuttlecock. I have only seen by accident a page of the unpublished manuscript relating to the present subject, which I dare say is, on the whole, friendly and just, and which has been suppressed as being too favorable, considering certain prejudices against me.

In matters of taste and feeling, one proof that my conclusions have not been quite shallow or hasty, is the circumstance of their having been lasting. I have the same

favorite books, pictures, passages that I ever had; I may, therefore, presume that they will last me my life — nay, I may indulge a hope that my thoughts will survive me. This continuity of impression is the only thing on which I pride myself. Even L——, whose relish of certain things is as keen and earnest as possible, takes a surfeit of admiration, and I should be afraid to ask about his select authors or particular friends, after a lapse of ten years. As to myself, anyone knows where to have me. What I have once made up my mind to, I abide by to the end of the chapter. One cause of my independence of opinion is, I believe, the liberty I give to others, or the very diffidence and distrust of making converts. I should be an excellent man on a jury. I might say little, but should starve "the other eleven obstinate fellows" out. I remember Mr. Godwin writing to Mr. Wordsworth, that "his tragedy of ANTONIO could not fail of success." It was damned past all redemption. I said to Mr. Wordsworth that I thought this a natural consequence; for how could anyone have a dramatic turn of mind who judged entirely of others from himself? Mr. Godwin might be convinced of the excellence of his work, but how could he know that others would be convinced of it, unless by supposing that they were as wise as himself, and as infallible critics of dramatic poetry — so many Aristotles sitting in judgment on Euripides! This shows why pride is connected with shyness and reserve; for the really proud have not so high an opinion of the generality as to suppose that they can understand them, or that there is any common measure between them. So Dryden exclaims of his opponents with bitter disdain —

"Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive."

I have not sought to make partisans, still less did I dream of making enemies; and have therefore kept my opinions myself, whether they were currently adopted or not. To get others to come into our ways of thinking, we must go over to theirs; and it is necessary to follow, in order to lead. At the time I lived here formerly, I had no suspicion that I should ever become a voluminous writer, yet I had just the same confidence in my feelings before I had ventured to air them in public as I have now. Neither the outcry *for* or *against* moves me a jot: I do not say that the one is not more agreeable than the other.

¹ Leigh Hunt wrote *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries* (1828).

¹ Lamb.

Not far from the spot where I write, I first read Chaucer's *Flower and Leaf*,¹ and was charmed with that young beauty, shrouded in her bower, and listening with ever-fresh delight to the repeated song of the nightingale close by her — the impression of the scene, the vernal landscape, the cool of the morning, the gushing notes of the songstress, "And ayen methought she sung close by mine ear,"

is as vivid as if it had been of yesterday; and nothing can persuade me that that is not a fine poem. I do not find this impression conveyed in Dryden's version, and therefore nothing can persuade me that that is as fine. I used to walk out at this time with Mr. and Miss L——² of an evening, to look at the Claude Lorraine skies over our heads melting from azure into purple and gold, and to gather mushrooms, that sprung up at our feet, to throw into our hashed mutton at supper. I was at that time an enthusiastic admirer of Claude, and could dwell for ever on one or two of the finest prints from him hung round my little room; the fleecy flocks, the bending trees, the winding streams, the groves, the nodding temples, the air-wove hills, and distant sunny vales; and tried to translate them into their lovely living hues. People then told me that Wilson was much superior to Claude: I did not believe them. Their pictures have since been seen together

at the British Institution, and all the world have come into my opinion. I have not, on that account, given it up. I will not compare our hashed mutton with Amelia's;³ but it put us in mind of it, and led to a discussion, sharply seasoned and well sustained, till midnight, the result of which appeared some years after in the *Edinburgh Review*. Have I a better opinion of those criticisms on that account, or should I therefore maintain them with greater vehemence and tenaciousness? Oh no; both rather with less, now that they are before the public, and it is for them to make their election.

It is in looking back to such scenes that I draw my best consolation for the future. Later impressions come and go, and serve to fill up the intervals; but these are my standing resource, my true classics. If I have had few real pleasures or advantages, my ideas, from their sinewy texture, have been to me in the nature of realities; and if I should not be able to add to the stock, I can live by husbanding the interest. As to my speculations, there is little to admire in them but my admiration of others; and whether they have an echo in time to come or not, I have learned to set a grateful value on the past, and am content to wind up the account of what is personal only to myself and the immediate circle of objects in which I have moved, with an act of easy oblivion, "And certain close such scene from every future view."

¹ Hazlitt is wrong in attributing this poem to Chaucer.

² Charles and Mary Lamb.

³ Fielding's *Amelia*, Book X, Chapter V.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY (1785–1859)

Thomas De Quincey was born at Manchester, August 15, 1785, the son of a prosperous merchant. He was sent to the Manchester Grammar School, from which he ran away when seventeen years old and spent a summer wandering in Wales. In the autumn he made his way to London, where he continued to lead a vagrant existence until his family reclaimed him and sent him to Oxford. He became acquainted with Coleridge, whose family he accompanied to Grassmere where, after 1809, he lived for some twenty years, in association with the Lake poets. Like Coleridge he had become addicted to the use of opium. His first important publication was an account of his use of the drug and the dreams that it brought him, *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, published in the *London Magazine* for 1821. In 1830 he removed with his family to Edinburgh, where he resided until his death in 1859.

De Quincey's writings are of a highly miscellaneous nature, being chiefly contributions to magazines on philosophy, political economy, history and literary criticism. His best known work was autobiographical, the famous *Confessions* and its sequel *Suspiria de Profundis* which describes the dreams induced by opium. *The English Mail Coach* is likewise an autobiographical experience with its attendant *Dream-Fugue*. This last and the *Suspiria* are the best examples of what De Quincey called impassioned prose, or prose having some of the imaginative and technical qualities of poetry, especially in the choice of words and sustained rhythms. In this respect De Quincey revived the poetic prose of the seventeenth century. He thus recovered for English

literature certain resources which had been lost sight of in the eighteenth century, and became a great influence on English prose style.

De Quincey's works have been edited by David Masson in fourteen volumes. A volume of selections edited by M. H. Turk is included in the Athenæum Press series. The best life is by Masson in the English Men of Letters series. There are critical essays by George Saintsbury in *Essays on English Literature*, and Sir Leslie Stephen in *Hours in a Library*.

SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS

1845

This title (*Sighs from the Depths*) covered three articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*, which formed a continuation of the *Confessions*. The third, which is given here, is an account of dreams experienced under the influence of opium, and is the most famous of all the examples of De Quincey's prose poetry.

LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

Oftentimes at Oxford I saw Levana in my dreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pretend to have leisure for very much scholarship, you will not be angry with me for telling you. Levana was the Roman goddess that performed for the newborn infant the earliest office of ennobling kindness — typical, by its mode, of that grandeur which belongs to man everywhere, and of that benignity in powers invisible, which even in Pagan worlds sometimes descends to sustain it. At the very moment of birth, just as the infant tasted for the first time the atmosphere of our troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. That might bear different interpretations. But immediately, lest so grand a creature should grovel there for more than one instant, either the paternal hand, as proxy for the goddess Levana, or some near kinsman, as proxy for the father, raised it upright, bade it look erect as the king of all this world, and presented its forehead to the stars, saying, perhaps, in his heart — "Behold what is greater than yourselves!" This symbolic act represented the function of Levana. And that mysterious lady, who never revealed her face (except to me in dreams), but always acted by delegation, had her name from the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian verb) *levare*, to raise aloft.

This is the explanation of Levana. And hence it has arisen that some people have understood by Levana the tutelary power that controls the education of the nursery. She, that would not suffer at his birth even a prefigurative or mimic degradation for her awful ward, far less could be supposed to suffer the real degradation attaching to the non-development of his powers. She there-

fore watches over human education. Now, the word *edūco*, with the penultimate short, was derived (by a process often exemplified in the crystallization of languages) from the word *edūco*, with the penultimate long. Whatsoever *edūces* or develops — *educates*. By the education of Levana, therefore, is meant — not the poor machinery that moves by spelling-books and grammars, but that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passion, by strife, by temptation, by the energies of resistance, works for ever upon children — resting not day or night, any more than the mighty wheel of day and night themselves, whose moments, like restless spokes, are glimmering for ever as they revolve.

If, then, these are the ministries by which Levana works, how profoundly must she reverence the agencies of grief! But you, reader, think — that children generally are not liable to grief such as mine. There are two senses in the word *generally* — the sense of Euclid where it means *universally* (or in the whole extent of the *genus*), and a foolish sense of this world where it means *usually*. Now I am far from saying that children universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of, who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *Foundation* should be there twelve years: he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but *that* it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs.

Therefore it is that Levana often communicates with the powers that shake man's heart: therefore it is that she dotes upon grief. "These ladies," said I softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, "these are the Sorrows; and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the *Parcæ* are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always

with colors sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called from the other side of the grave offences that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say now; but in Oxford I said — "one of whom I know, and the others too surely I shall know." For already, in my fervent youth, I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark background of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful sisters. These sisters — by what name shall we call them?

If I say simply — "The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be understood of individual sorrow — separate cases of sorrow, — whereas I want a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersonations, that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them, therefore, *Our Ladies of Sorrow*. I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household; and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. Them I saw often conversing with Levana, and sometimes about myself. Do they talk, then? Oh, no! Mighty phantoms like these disdain the infirmities of language. They may utter voices through the organs of man when they dwell in human hearts, but amongst themselves is no voice nor sound — eternal silence reigns in their kingdoms. They spoke not as they talked with Levana. They whispered not. They sang not. Though oftentimes methought they *might* have sung; for I upon earth had heard their mysteries oftentimes deciphered by harp and timbrel, by dulcimer and organ. Like God, whose servants they are, they utter their pleasure, not by sounds that perish, or by words that go astray, but by signs in heaven — by changes on earth — by pulses in secret rivers — heraldries painted on darkness — and hieroglyphics written on the tablets of the brain. They wheeled in mazes; I spelled the steps. They telegraphed from afar; I read the signals. They conspired together; and on the mirrors of darkness my eye traced the plots. *Theirs* were the symbols, — *mine* are the words.

What is it the sisters are? What is it that

they do? Let me describe their form, and their presence; if form it were that still fluctuated in its outline; or presence it were that for ever advanced to the front, or for ever receded amongst shades.

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, when a voice was heard of lamentation — Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened for ever, which, heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds; oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sate all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with, whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the spring-time of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, He recalled her to Himself. But her blind father mourns for ever over her; still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is now within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bedchamber of the Czar, bringing before his eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides a ghostly intruder into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honor with the title of "Madonna."

The second sister is called *Mater Sulpiorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops for ever; for ever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic; raging in the highest against heaven; and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamors, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in Mediterranean galleys, of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England, of the baffled penitent reverting his eye for ever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother, as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered; — every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; — every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsmen, whom God will judge; — every captive in every dungeon; — all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law, and children of hereditary disgrace — all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key;

but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third sister, who is also the youngest — Hush! whisper, whilst we talk of *her*! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers — for noon of day or noon of night — for ebbing or for flowing tide — may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum* — Our Lady of Darkness.

These were the *Semnai Theai*, or Sublime Goddesses — these were the *Eumenides*, or Gracious Ladies (so called by antiquity in shuddering propitiation) — of my Oxford dreams. Madonna spoke. She spoke by her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to Our Lady of Sighs; and *what* she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this:

"Lo! here is he, whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled, and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he be-

come idolatrous; and through me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshipped the worm, and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness; saintly its corruption. Him, this young idolater, I have seasoned for thee, dear gentle Sister of Sighs! Do thou take him now to thy heart, and season him for our dreadful sister. And thou" — turning to the *Mater Tenebrarum*, she said — "wicked sister, that temptest and hatest, do thou take him from her. See that thy sceptre lie heavy on his head. Suffer not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope — wither the relentings of love — scorch the fountains of tears: curse him as only thou canst curse. So shall he be accomplished in the furnace — so shall he see the things that ought not to be seen — sights that are abominable, and secrets that are unutterable. So shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths, fearful truths. So shall he rise again before he dies. And so shall our commission be accomplished which from God we had — to plague his heart until we had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."

THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH

1849

In October, 1849, *Blackwood's Magazine* contained an anonymous article entitled *The Glory of Motion*, giving an account of coaching experiences, particularly of the bearing of the news of the victory of Waterloo to all parts of the kingdom. In December appeared two more sections of what was then called *The English Mail Coach*. Later, for the collected edition of his works, De Quincey supplied the following introduction:

The English Mail-Coach. — This little paper, according to my original intention, formed part of the *Suspiria de Profundis*; from which, for a momentary purpose, I did not scruple to detach it, and to publish it apart, as sufficiently intelligible even when dislocated from its place in a larger whole. To my surprise, however, one or two critics, not carelessly in conversation, but deliberately in print, professed their inability to apprehend the meaning of the whole, or to follow the links of the connexion between its several parts. I am myself as little able to understand where the difficulty lies, or to detect any lurking obscurity, as these critics found themselves to unravel my logic. Possibly I may not be an indifferent and neutral judge in such a case. I will therefore sketch a brief abstract of the little paper according to my original design, and then leave the reader

to judge how far this design is kept in sight through the actual execution.

Thirty-seven years ago, or rather more, accident made me, in the dead of night, and of a night memorably solemn, the solitary witness of an appalling scene, which threatened instant death in a shape the most terrific to two young people whom I had no means of assisting, except in so far as I was able to give them a most hurried warning of their danger; but even that not until they stood within the very shadow of the catastrophe, being divided from the most frightful of deaths by scarcely more, if more at all, than seventy seconds.

Such was the scene, such in its outline, from which the whole of this paper radiates as a natural expansion. This scene is circumstantially narrated in Section the Second, entitled *The Vision of Sudden Death*.

But a movement of horror, and of spontaneous recoil from this dreadful scene, naturally carried the whole of that scene, raised and idealized, into my dreams, and very soon into a rolling succession of dreams. The actual scene, as looked down upon from the box of the mail, was transformed into a dream, as tumultuous and changing as a musical fugue. This troubled dream is circumstantially reported in Section the Third, entitled *Dream-Fugue on the theme of Sudden Death*. What I had beheld from my seat upon the mail, — the scenical strife of action and passion, of anguish and fear, as I had there witnessed them moving in ghostly silence, — this duel between life and death narrowing itself to a point of such exquisite evanescence as the collision neared: all these elements of the scene blended, under the law of association, with the previous and permanent features of distinction investing the mail itself; which features at that time lay — 1st, in velocity unprecedented, 2dly, in the power and beauty of the horses, 3dly, in the official connexion with the government of a great nation, and, 4thly, in the function, almost a consecrated function, of publishing and diffusing through the land the great political events, and especially the great battles, during a conflict of unparalleled grandeur. These honorary distinctions are all described circumstantially in the First or introductory Section (*The Glory of Motion*). The three first were distinctions maintained at all times; but the fourth and grandest belonged exclusively to the war with Napoleon; and this it was which most naturally introduced Waterloo into the dream. Waterloo, I understand, was the particular feature of the *Dream-Fugue* which my censors were least able to account for. Yet surely Waterloo, which, in common with every other great battle, it had been our special privilege to publish over all the land, most naturally entered the dream under the licence of our privilege. If not — if there be anything amiss — let the Dream be responsible. The Dream is a law to itself; and as well quarrel with a rainbow for

showing, or for *not* showing, a secondary arch. So far as I know, every element in the shifting movements of the Dream derived itself either primarily from the incidents of the actual scene, or from secondary features associated with the mail. For example, the cathedral aisle derived itself from the mimic combination of features which grouped themselves together at the point of approaching collision — viz. an arrow-like section of the road, six hundred yards long, under the solemn lights described, with lofty trees meeting overhead in arches. The guard's horn, again — a humble instrument in itself — was yet glorified as the organ of publication for so many great national events. And the incident of the Dying Trumpeter, who rises from a marble bas-relief, and carries a marble trumpet to his marble lips for the purpose of warning the female infant, was doubtless secretly suggested by my own imperfect effort to seize the guard's horn, and to blow the warning blast. But the Dream knows best; and the Dream, I say again, is the responsible party.

SECTION II — THE VISION OF SUDDEN DEATH

What is to be taken as the predominant opinion of man, reflective and philosophic, upon SUDDEN DEATH? It is remarkable that, in different conditions of society, sudden death has been variously regarded as the consummation of an earthly career most fervently to be desired, or, again, as that consummation which is with most horror to be deprecated. Cæsar the Dictator, at his last dinner-party (*cæna*), on the very evening before his assassination, when the minutes of his earthly career were numbered, being asked what death, in *his* judgment, might be pronounced the most eligible, replied "that which should be most sudden." On the other hand, the divine Litany of our English Church, when breathing forth supplications, as if in some representative character, for the whole human race prostrate before God, places such a death in the very van of horrors: "From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from SUDDEN DEATH — *Good Lord, deliver us.*" Sudden death is here made to crown the climax in a grand ascent of calamities; it is ranked among the last of curses; and yet by the noblest of Romans it was ranked as the first of blessings. In that difference most readers will see little more than the essential difference between Christianity and Paganism. But this, on consideration, I doubt. The Christian Church may be right in its estimate of sudden death; and it is a natural feeling, though after all it may also be an infirm one, to wish for a

quiet dismissal from life, as that which *seems* most reconcilable with meditation, with penitential retrospects, and with the humilities of farewell prayer. There does not, however, occur to me any direct scriptural warrant for this earnest petition of the English Litany, unless under a special construction of the word "sudden." It seems a petition indulged rather and conceded to human infirmity than exacted from human piety. It is not so much a doctrine built upon the eternities of the Christian system as a plausible opinion built upon special varieties of physical temperament. Let that, however, be as it may, two remarks suggest themselves as prudent restraints upon a doctrine which else *may* wander, and *has* wandered, into an uncharitable superstition. The first is this: that many people are likely to exaggerate the horror of a sudden death from the disposition to lay a false stress upon words or acts simply because by an accident they have become *final* words or acts. If a man dies, for instance, by some sudden death when he happens to be intoxicated, such a death is falsely regarded with peculiar horror; as though the intoxication were suddenly exalted into a blasphemy. But *that* is unphilosophic. The man was, or he was not, *habitually* a drunkard. If not, if his intoxication were a solitary accident, there can be no reason for allowing special emphasis to this act simply because through misfortune it became his final act. Nor, on the other hand, if it were no accident, but one of his *habitual* transgressions, will it be the more habitual or the more a transgression because some sudden calamity, surprising him, has caused this habitual transgression to be also a final one. Could the man have had any reason even dimly to foresee his own sudden death, there would have been a new feature in his act of intemperance — a feature of presumption and irreverence, as in one that, having known himself drawing near to the presence of God, should have suited his demeanor to an expectation so awful. But this is no part of the case supposed. And the only new element in the man's act is not any element of special immorality, but simply of special misfortune.

The other remark has reference to the meaning of the word *sudden*. Very possibly Cæsar and the Christian Church do not differ in the way supposed, — that is, do not differ by any difference of doctrine as between Pagan and Christian views of the moral temper appropriate to death; but perhaps

they are contemplating different cases. Both contemplate a violent death, a *Baſilivaros* — death that is *Baſilos*, or, in other words, death that is brought about, not by internal and spontaneous change, but by active force having its origin from without. In this meaning the two authorities agree. Thus far they are in harmony. But the difference is that the Roman by the word "sudden" means *unlingering*, whereas the Christian Litany by "sudden death" means a death *without warning*, consequently without any available summons to religious preparation. The poor mutineer who kneels down to gather into his heart the bullets from twelve firelocks of his pitying comrades dies by a most sudden death in Cæsar's sense; one shock, one mighty spasm, one (possibly not one) groan, and all is over. But, in the sense of the Litany, the mutineer's death is far from sudden: his offence originally, his imprisonment, his trial, the interval between his sentence and its execution, having all furnished him with separate warnings of his fate — having all summoned him to meet it with solemn preparation.

Here at once, in this sharp verbal distinction, we comprehend the faithful earnestness with which a holy Christian Church pleads on behalf of her poor departing children that God would vouchsafe to them the last great privilege and distinction possible on a death-bed, viz., the opportunity of untroubled preparation for facing this mighty trial. Sudden death, as a mere variety in the modes of dying where death in some shape is inevitable, proposes a question of choice which, equally in the Roman and the Christian sense, will be variously answered according to each man's variety of temperament. Meantime, one aspect of sudden death there is, one modification, upon which no doubt can arise, that of all martyrdoms it is the most agitating — viz., where it surprises a man under circumstances which offer (or which seem to offer) some hurrying, flying, inappreciably minute chance of evading it. Sudden as the danger which it affronts must be any effort by which such an evasion can be accomplished. Even *that*, even the sickening necessity for hurrying in extremity where all hurry seems destined to be vain, — even that anguish is liable to a hideous exasperation in one particular case: viz., where the appeal is made not exclusively to the instinct of self-preservation, but to the conscience, on behalf of some other life besides your own, accidentally thrown upon *your* protection.

To fail, to collapse in a service merely your own, might seem comparatively venial; though, in fact, it is far from venial. But to fail in a case where Providence has suddenly thrown into your hands the final interests of another, — a fellow-creature shuddering between the gates of life and death: this, to a man of apprehensive conscience, would mingle the misery of an atrocious criminality with the misery of a bloody calamity. You are called upon, by the case supposed, possibly to die, but to die at the very moment when, by any even partial failure or effeminate collapse of your energies, you will be self-denounced as a murderer. You had but the twinkling of an eye for your effort, and that effort might have been unavailing; but to have risen to the level of such an effort would have rescued you, though not from dying, yet from dying as a traitor to your final and farewell duty.

The situation here contemplated exposes a dreadful ulcer, lurking far down in the depths of human nature. It is not that men generally are summoned to face such awful trials. But potentially, and in shadowy outline, such a trial is moving subterraneously in perhaps all men's natures. Upon the secret mirror of our dreams such a trial is darkly projected, perhaps, to every one of us. That dream, so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, through languishing prostration in hope and the energies of hope, that constant sequel of lying down before the lion publishes the secret frailty of human nature — reveals its deep-seated falsehood to itself — records its abysmal treachery. Perhaps not one of us escapes that dream; perhaps, as by some sorrowful doom of man, that dream repeats for every one of us, through every generation, the original temptation in Eden. Every one of us, in this dream, has a bait offered to the infirm places of his own individual will; once again a snare is presented for tempting him into captivity to a luxury of ruin; once again, as in aboriginal Paradise, the man falls by his own choice; again, by infinite iteration, the ancient earth groans to Heaven, through her secret caves, over the weakness of her child. "Nature, from her seat, sighing through all her works," again "gives signs of woe that all is lost"; and again the counter-sigh is repeated to the sorrowing heavens for the endless rebellion against God. It is not without probability that in the world of dreams every one of us ratifies for himself the original transgression. In dreams, perhaps under some secret conflict

of the midnight sleeper, lighted up to the consciousness at the time, but darkened to the memory as soon as all is finished, each several child of our mysterious race completes for himself the treason of the aboriginal fall.

The incident, so memorable in itself by its features of horror, and so scenical by its grouping for the eye, which furnished the text for this reverie upon *Sudden Death* occurred to myself in the dead of night, as a solitary spectator, when seated on the box of the Manchester and Glasgow mail, in the second or third summer after Waterloo. I find it necessary to relate the circumstances, because they are such as could not have occurred unless under a singular combination of accidents. In those days, the oblique and lateral communications with many rural post-offices were so arranged, either through necessity or through defect of system, as to make it requisite for the main north-western mail (*i.e.*, the *down* mail) on reaching Manchester to halt for a number of hours; how many, I do not remember; six or seven, I think; but the result was that, in the ordinary course, the mail recommenced its journey northwards about midnight. Wearied with the long detention at a gloomy hotel, I walked out about eleven o'clock at night for the sake of fresh air meaning to fall in with the mail and resume my seat at the post-office. The night, however, being yet dark, as the moon had scarcely risen, and the streets being at that hour empty, so as to offer no opportunities for asking the road, I lost my way, and did not reach the post-office until it was considerably past midnight; but, to my great relief (as it was important for me to be in Westmoreland by the morning), I saw in the huge saucer eyes of the mail, blazing through the gloom, an evidence that my chance was not yet lost. Past the time it was; but, by some rare accident, the mail was not even yet ready to start. I ascended to my seat on the box, where my cloak was still lying as it had lain at the Bridgewater Arms. I had left it there in imitation of a nautical discoverer, who leaves a bit of bunting on the shore of his discovery, by way of warning off the ground the whole human race, and notifying to the Christian and the heathen worlds, with his best compliments, that he has hoisted his pocket-handkerchief once and for ever upon that virgin soil: thenceforward claiming the *jus dominii*¹ to the top of the atmosphere above it, and also the right of driving shafts to the centre of the earth below it; so that all

¹ law of ownership.

people found after this warning either aloft in upper chambers of the atmosphere, or groping in subterraneous shafts, or squatting audaciously on the surface of the soil, will be treated as trespassers — kicked, that is to say, or decapitated, as circumstances may suggest, by their very faithful servant, the owner of the said pocket-handkerchief. In the present case, it is probable that my cloak might not have been respected, and the *jus gentium*² might have been cruelly violated in my person — for, in the dark, people commit deeds of darkness, gas being a great ally of morality; but it so happened that on this night there was no other outside passenger; and thus the crime, which else was but too probable, missed fire for want of a criminal.

Having mounted the box, I took a small quantity of laudanum, having already travelled two hundred and fifty miles — *viz.*, from a point seventy miles beyond London. In the taking of laudanum there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident it drew upon me the special attention of my assessor on the box, the coachman. And in *that* also there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident, and with great delight, it drew my own attention to the fact that this coachman was a monster in point of bulk, and that he had but one eye. In fact, he had been foretold by Virgil as

“Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.”²

He answered to the conditions in every one of the items: — 1, a monster he was; 2, dreadful; 3, shapeless; 4, huge; 5, who had lost an eye. But why should *that* delight me? Had he been one of the Calenders³ in the *Arabian Nights*, and had paid down his eye as the price of his criminal curiosity, what right had I to exult in his misfortune? I did *not* exult; I delighted in no man's punishment, though it were even merited. But these personal distinctions (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) identified in an instant an old friend of mine whom I had known in the south for some years as the most masterly of mail-coachmen. He was the man in all Europe that could (if *any* could) have driven six-in-hand full gallop over *Al Sirat*⁴ — that dreadful bridge of Mahomet,

¹ law of nations.

² *Æneid*, III, 658. “A horrible monster, misshapen, immense, and bereft of eyesight.” Polyphemus, one of the Cyclops, whose eye was put out by Ulysses, is described.

³ A Calender is one of an order of Dervishes, founded in the fourteenth century, who live by alms.

⁴ According to Mahomet, the bridge over Hades, over which souls must pass to Paradise.

with no side battlements, and of *extra* room not enough for a razor's edge — leading right across the bottomless gulf. Under this eminent man, whom in Greek I cognominated Cyclops *Diphrelates* (Cyclops the Charioteer), I, and others known to me, studied the diphrelatic art. Excuse, reader, a word too elegant to be pedantic. As a pupil, though I paid extra fees, it is to be lamented that I did not stand high in his esteem. It showed his dogged honesty (though, observe, not his discernment) that he could not see my merits. Let us excuse his absurdity in this particular by remembering his want of an eye. Doubtless *that* made him blind to my merits. In the art of conversation, however, he admitted that I had the whip-hand of him. On the present occasion great joy was at our meeting. But what was Cyclops doing here? Had the medical men recommended northern air, or how? I collected, from such explanations as he volunteered, that he had an interest at stake in some suit-at-law now pending at Lancaster; so that probably he had got himself transferred to this station for the purpose of connecting with his professional pursuits an instant readiness for the calls of his lawsuit.

Meantime, what are we stopping for? Surely we have now waited long enough. Oh, this procrastinating mail, and this procrastinating post-office! Can't they take a lesson upon that subject from *me*? Some people have called *me* procrastinating. Yet you are witness, reader, that I was here kept waiting for the post-office. Will the post-office lay its hand on its heart, in its moments of sobriety, and assert that ever it waited for *me*? What are they about? The guard tells me that there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused by war, by wind, by weather, in the packet service, which as yet does not benefit at all by steam. For an *extra* hour, it seems, the post-office has been engaged in threshing out the pure wheat correspondence of Glasgow, and winnowing it from the chaff of all baser intermediate towns. But at last all is finished. Sound your horn, guard! Manchester, good-bye! we've lost an hour by your criminal conduct at the post-office; which, however, though I do not mean to part with a serviceable ground of complaint, and one which really *is* such for the horses, to me secretly is an advantage, since it compels us to look sharply for this lost hour amongst the next eight or nine, and to recover it (if we can) at the rate of one mile

extra per hour. Off we are at last, and at eleven miles an hour; and for the moment I detect no changes in the energy or in the skill of Cyclops.

From Manchester to Kendal, which virtually (though not in law) is the capital of Westmoreland, there were at this time seven stages of eleven miles each. The first five of these, counting from Manchester, terminate in Lancaster; which is therefore fifty-five miles north of Manchester, and the same distance exactly from Liverpool. The first three stages terminate in Preston (called, by way of distinction from other towns of that name, *Proud Preston*); at which place it is that the separate roads from Liverpool and from Manchester to the North become confluent.¹ Within these first three stages lay the foundation, the progress, and termination of our night's adventure. During the first stage, I found out that Cyclops was mortal: he was liable to the shocking affection of sleep — a thing which previously I had never suspected. If a man indulges in the vicious habit of sleeping, all the skill in aurigation of Apollo himself, with the horses of Aurora to execute his notions, avails him nothing. "Oh, Cyclops!" I exclaimed, "thou art mortal. My friend, thou snoorest." Through the first eleven miles, however, this infirmity — which I grieve to say that he shared with the whole Pagan Pantheon — betrayed itself only by brief snatches. On waking up, he made an apology for himself which, instead of mending matters, laid open a gloomy vista of coming disasters. The summer assizes, he reminded me, were now going on at Lancaster: in consequence of which for three nights and three days he had not lain down on a bed. During the day he was waiting for his own summons as a witness on the trial in which he was interested, or else, lest he should be missing at the critical moment, was drinking with the other witnesses under the pastoral surveillance of the attorneys. During the night, or that part of it which at sea would form the middle watch, he was driving. This explanation certainly accounted for his drowsiness, but in a way which made it much more alarming; since now, after several days' resistance to this infirmity, at length he was steadily giving way. Throughout the

¹ Suppose a capital Y (the Pythagorean letter): Lancaster is at the foot of this letter; Liverpool at the top of the *right* branch; Manchester at the top of the *left*; Proud Preston at the centre, where the two branches unite. It is thirty-three miles along either of the two branches; it is twenty-two miles along the stem, — viz. from Preston in the middle to Lancaster at the root. There's a lesson in geography for the reader! (De Quincey's note.)

second stage he grew more and more drowsy. In the second mile of the third stage he surrendered himself finally and without a struggle to his perilous temptation. All his past resistance had but deepened the weight of this final oppression. Seven atmospheres of sleep rested upon him; and, to consummate the case, our worthy guard, after singing "Love amongst the Roses" for perhaps thirty times, without invitation and without applause, had in revenge moodily resigned himself to slumber — not so deep, doubtless, as the coachman's, but deep enough for mischief. And thus at last, about ten miles from Preston, it came about that I found myself left in charge of his Majesty's London and Glasgow mail, then running at the least twelve miles an hour.

What made this negligence less criminal than else it must have been thought was the condition of the roads at night during the assizes. At that time, all the law business of populous Liverpool, and also of populous Manchester, with its vast cincture of populous rural districts, was called up by ancient usage to the tribunal of Lilliputian Lancaster.¹ To break up this old traditional usage required, 1, a conflict with powerful established interests, 2, a large system of new arrangements, and 3, a new parliamentary statute. But as yet this change was merely in contemplation. As things were at present, twice in the year² so vast a body of business rolled northwards from the southern quarter of the county that for a fortnight at least it occupied the severe exertions of two judges in its despatch. The consequence of this was that every horse available for such a service, along the whole line of road, was exhausted in carrying down the multitudes of people who were parties to the different suits. By sunset, therefore, it usually happened that, through utter exhaustion amongst men and horses, the road sank into profound silence. Except the exhaustion in the vast adjacent county of York from a contested election, no such silence succeeding to no such fiery uproar was ever witnessed in England.

On this occasion the usual silence and solitude prevailed along the road. Not a hoof nor a wheel was to be heard. And, to strengthen this false luxurious confidence in the noiseless roads, it happened also that the

night was one of peculiar solemnity and peace. For my own part, though slightly alive to the possibilities of peril, I had so far yielded to the influence of the mighty calm as to sink into a profound reverie. The month was August; in the middle of which lay my own birthday — a festival to every thoughtful man suggesting solemn and often sigh-born thoughts. The county was my own native county — upon which, in its southern section, more than upon any equal area known to man past or present, had descended the original curse of labor in its heaviest form, not mastering the bodies only of men, as of slaves, or criminals in mines, but working through the fiery will. Upon no equal space of earth was, or ever had been, the same energy of human power put forth daily. At this particular season also of the assizes, that dreadful hurricane of flight and pursuit, as it might have seemed to a stranger, which swept to and from Lancaster all day long, hunting the county up and down, and regularly subsiding back into silence about sunset, could not fail (when united with this permanent distinction of Lancashire as the very metropolis and citadel of labor) to point the thoughts pathetically upon that counter-vision of rest, of saintly repose from strife and sorrow, towards which, as their secret haven, the profounder aspirations of man's heart are in solitude continually travelling. Obliquely upon our left we were nearing the sea; which also must, under the present circumstances, be repeating the general state of halcyon repose. The sea, the atmosphere, the light, bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull. Moonlight and the first timid tremblings of the dawn were by this time blending; and the blendings were brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight silvery mist, motionless, and dreamy, that covered the woods and fields, but with a veil of equable transparency. Except the feet of our own horses, — which, running on a sandy margin of the road, made but little disturbance, — there was no sound abroad. In the clouds and on the earth prevailed the same majestic peace; and, in spite of all that the villain of a schoolmaster has done for the ruin of our sublimer thoughts, which are the thoughts of our infancy, we still believe in no such nonsense as a limited atmosphere. Whatever we may swear with our false feign-

¹ I owe the suggestion of this word to an obscure remembrance of a beautiful phrase in "Giraldus Cambrensis" — viz., *suspiciosa cogitationes*. (De Quincey's note.) "Giraldus Cambrensis": Gerald de Barry (1146-1220), a Welsh historian.

² Lancaster, the county town of Lancashire, in which Liverpool and Manchester, newer and much larger cities, are situated.

² There were at that time only two assizes even in the most populous counties — viz., the Lent Assizes and the Summer Assizes. (De Quincey's note.)

ing lips, in our faithful hearts we still believe, and must forever believe, in fields of air traversing the total gulf between earth and the central heavens. Still, in the confidence of children that tread without fear *every* chamber in their father's house, and to whom no door is closed, we, in that Sabbatic vision which sometimes is revealed for an hour upon nights like this, ascend with easy steps from the sorrow-stricken fields of earth upwards to the sandals of God.

Suddenly, from thoughts like these I was awakened to a sullen sound, as of some motion on the distant road. It stole upon the air for a moment; I listened in awe; but then it died away. Once roused, however, I could not but observe with alarm the quickened motion of our horses. Ten years' experience had made my eye learned in the valuing of motion; and I saw that we were now running thirteen miles an hour. I pretend to no presence of mind. On the contrary, my fear is that I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies when the signal is flying for *action*. But, on the other hand, this accursed gift I have, as regards *thought*, that in the first step towards the possibility of a misfortune I see its total evolution; in the radix of the series I see too certainly and too instantly its entire expansion; in the first syllable of the dreadful sentence I read already the last. It was not that I feared for ourselves. *Us* our bulk and impetus charmed against peril in any collision. And I had ridden through too many hundreds of perils that were frightful to approach, that were matter of laughter to look back upon, the first face of which was horror, the parting face a jest — for any anxiety to rest upon *our* interests. The mail was not built, I felt assured, nor bespoke, that could betray *me* who trusted to its protection. But any carriage that we could meet would be frail and light in comparison of ourselves. And I remarked this ominous accident of our situation, — we were on the wrong side of the road. But then, it may be said, the other party, if other there was, might also be on the wrong side; and two wrongs might make a right. That was not likely. The same motive which had drawn *us* to the right-hand side of the road — viz., the luxury of the soft beaten sand as contrasted with the paved centre — would prove attractive to others. The two adverse carriages would therefore,

to a certainty, be travelling on the same side; and from this side, as not being ours in law, the crossing over to the other would, of course, be looked for from *us*.¹ Our lamps, still lighted, would give the impression of vigilance on our part. And every creature that met us would rely upon *us* for quartering.² All this, and if the separate links of the anticipation had been a thousand times more, I saw, not discursively, or by effort, or by succession, but by one flash of horrid simultaneous intuition.

Under this steady though rapid anticipation of the evil which *might* be gathering ahead, ah! what a sullen mystery of fear, what a sigh of woe, was that which stole upon the air, as again the far-off sound of a wheel was heard! A whisper it was — a whisper from, perhaps, four miles off — secretly announcing a ruin that, being foreseen, was not the less inevitable; that, being known, was not therefore healed. What could be done — who was it that could do it — to check the storm-flight of these maniacal horses? Could I not seize the reins from the grasp of the slumbering coachman? You, reader, think that it would have been in *your* power to do so. And I quarrel not with your estimate of yourself. But, from the way in which the coachman's hand was viced between his upper and lower thigh, this was impossible. Easy was it? See, then, that bronze equestrian statue. The cruel rider has kept the bit in his horse's mouth for two centuries. Unbridle him for a minute, if you please, and wash his mouth with water. Easy was it? Unhorse me, then, that imperial rider; knock me those marble feet from those marble stirrups of Charlemagne.

The sounds ahead strengthened, and were now too clearly the sounds of wheels. Who and what could it be? Was it industry in a taxed cart? Was it youthful gaiety in a gig? Was it sorrow that loitered, or joy that raced? For as yet the snatches of sound were too intermitting, from distance, to decipher the character of the motion. Whoever were the travellers, something must be done to warn them. Upon the other party rests the active responsibility, but upon *us* — and, woe is me! that *us* was reduced to my frail opium-

¹ It is true that, according to the law of the case as established by legal precedents, all carriages were required to give way before royal equipages, and therefore before the mail as one of them. But this only increased the danger, as being a regulation very imperfectly made known, very unequally enforced, and therefore often embarrassing the movements on both sides. (De Quincey's note.)

² This is the technical word, and, I presume, derived from the French *carriager*, to evade a rut or any obstacle. (De Quincey's note.)

shattered self — rests the responsibility of warning. Yet, how should this be accomplished? Might I not sound the guard's horn? Already, on the first thought, I was making my way over the roof of the guard's seat. But this, from the accident which I have mentioned, of the foreign mails being piled upon the roof, was a difficult and even dangerous attempt to one cramped by nearly three hundred miles of outside travelling. And, fortunately, before I had lost much time in the attempt, our frantic horses swept round an angle of the road which opened upon us that final stage where the collision must be accomplished and the catastrophe sealed. All was apparently finished. The court was sitting; the case was heard; the judge had finished; and only the verdict was yet in arrear.

Before us lay an avenue straight as an arrow, six hundred yards, perhaps, in length; and the umbrageous trees, which rose in a regular line from either side, meeting high overhead, gave to it the character of a cathedral aisle. These trees lent a deeper solemnity to the early light; but there was still light enough to perceive, at the further end of this Gothic aisle, a frail reedy gig, in which were seated a young man, and by his side a young lady. Ah, young sir! what are you about? If it is requisite that you should whisper your communications to this young lady — though really I see nobody, at an hour and on a road so solitary, likely to overhear you — is it therefore requisite that you should carry your lips forward to hers? The little carriage is creeping on at one mile an hour; and the parties within it, being thus tenderly engaged, are naturally bending down their heads. Between them and eternity, to all human calculation, there is but a minute and a half. Oh heavens! what is it that I shall do? Speaking or acting, what help can I offer? Strange it is, and to a mere auditor of the tale might seem laughable, that I should need a suggestion from the *Iliad* to prompt the sole resource that remained. Yet so it was. Suddenly I remembered the shout of Achilles, and its effect. But could I pretend to shout like the son of Peleus, aided by Pallas? No; but then I needed not the shout that should alarm all Asia militant; such a shout would suffice as might carry terror into the hearts of two thoughtless young people and one gig-horse. I shouted — and the young man heard me not. A second time I shouted — and now he heard me, for now he raised his head.

Here, then, all had been done that, by me, *could* be done; more on *my* part was not possible. Mine had been the first step; the second was for the young man; the third was for God. If, said I, this stranger is a brave man, and if indeed he loves the young girl at his side — or, loving her not, if he feels the obligation, pressing upon every man worthy to be called a man, of doing his utmost for a woman confided to his protection — he will at least make some effort to save her. If *that* fails, he will not perish the more, or by a death more cruel, for having made it; and he will die as a brave man should, with his face to the danger, and with his arm about the woman that he sought in vain to save. But, if he makes no effort, — shrinking without a struggle from his duty, — he himself will not the less certainly perish for this baseness of poltroonery. He will die no less: and why not? Wherefore should we grieve that there is one craven less in the world? No; *let* him perish, without a pitying thought of ours wasted upon him; and, in that case, all our grief will be reserved for the fate of the helpless girl who now, upon the least shadow of failure in *him*, must by the fiercest of translations — must without time for a prayer — must within seventy seconds — stand before the judgment-seat of God.

But craven he was not: sudden had been the call upon him, and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw, he heard, he comprehended, the ruin that was coming down: already its gloomy shadow darkened above him; and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. Ah! what a vulgar thing does courage seem when we see nations buying it and selling it for a shilling a-day: ah! what a sublime thing does courage seem when some fearful summons on the great deeps of life carries a man, as if running before a hurricane, up to the giddy crest of some tumultuous crisis from which lie two courses, and a voice says to him audibly, "One way lies hope; take the other, and mourn for ever!" How grand a triumph if, even then, amidst the raving of all around him, and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation — is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God, and to seek his counsel from *Him*!

For seven seconds, it might be, of his seventy, the stranger settled his countenance steadfastly upon us, as if to search and value every element in the conflict before him. For five seconds more of his seventy he sat immovably, like one that mused on some great purpose. For five more, perhaps, he sat with

eyes upraised, like one that prayed in sorrow, under some extremity of doubt, for light that should guide him to the better choice. Then suddenly he rose; stood upright; and, by a powerful strain upon the reins, raising his horse's fore-feet from the ground, he slewed him round on the pivot of his hind-legs, so as to plant the little equipage in a position nearly at right angles to ours. Thus far his condition was not improved; except as a first step had been taken towards the possibility of a second. If no more were done, nothing was done; for the carriage still occupied the very centre of our path, though in an altered direction. Yet even now it may not be too late: fifteen of the seventy seconds may still be unexhausted; and one almighty bound may avail to clear the ground. Hurry, then, hurry! for the flying moments — *they* hurry: Oh, hurry, hurry, my brave young man! for the cruel hoofs of our horses — *they* also hurry! Fast are the flying moments, faster are the hoofs of our horses. But fear not for *him*, if human energy can suffice; faithful was he that drove to his terrific duty; faithful was the horse to *his* command. One blow, one impulse given with voice and hand, by the stranger, one rush from the horse, one bound as if in the act of rising to a fence, landed the docile creature's forefeet upon the crown or arching centre of the road. The larger half of the little equipage had then cleared our overtowering shadow: *that* was evident even to my own agitated sight. But it mattered little that one wreck should float off in safety if upon the wreck that perished were embarked the human freightage. The rear part of the carriage — was *that* certainly beyond the line of absolute ruin? What power could answer the question? Glance of eye, thought of man, wing of angel, which of these had speed enough to sweep between the question and the answer, and divide the one from the other? Light does not tread upon the steps of light more indivisibly than did our all-conquering arrival upon the escaping efforts of the gig. *That* must the young man have felt too plainly. His back was now turned to us; not by sight could he any longer communicate with the peril; but, by the dreadful rattle of our harness, too truly had his ear been instructed that all was finished as regarded any effort of *his*. Already in resignation he had rested from his struggle; and perhaps in his heart he was whispering, "Father, which art in heaven, do Thou finish above what I on earth have attempted." Faster than ever millrace we ran past them in our

inexorable flight. Oh, raving of hurricanes that must have sounded in their young ears at the moment of our transit! Even in that moment the thunder of collision spoke aloud. Either with the swinglebar, or with the haunch of our near leader, we had struck the off-wheel of the little gig; which stood rather obliquely, and not quite so far advanced as to be accurately parallel with the near-wheel. The blow, from the fury of our passage, resounded terrifically. I rose in horror, to gaze upon the ruins we might have caused. From my elevated station I looked down, and looked back upon the scene; which in a moment told its own tale, and wrote all its records on my heart for ever.

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably, with his fore-feet upon the paved crest of the central road. He of the whole party might be supposed untouched by the passion of death. The little cany carriage — partly, perhaps, from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement, partly from the thundering blow we had given to it — as if it sympathized with human horror, was all alive with tremblings and shiverings. The young man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not to look round; for he knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady —

But the lady —! Oh, heavens! will that spectacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case; suffer me to recall before your mind the circumstances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night — from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight — from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love — suddenly as from the woods and fields — suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation — suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors, and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered; the strife was finished; the vision was closed. In the

twinkling of an eye, our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle; at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction; the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams for ever.

SECTION III — DREAM-FUGUE

FOUNDED ON THE PRECEDING THEME OF
SUDDEN DEATH

"Whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who moved
Their stops and chords was seen; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue."
Paradise Lost, Bk. XI.

Tumultuosissimamente

Passion of sudden death! that once in youth I read and interpreted by the shadows of thy averted signs!¹ — rapture of panic taking the shape (which amongst tombs in churches I have seen) of woman bursting her sepulchral bonds — of woman's Ionic form bending forward from the ruins of her grave with arching foot, with eyes upraised, with clasped adoring hands — waiting, watching, trembling, praying for the trumpet's call to rise from dust for ever! Ah, vision too fearful of shuddering humanity on the brink of almighty abysses! — vision that didst start back, that didst reel away, like a shrivelling scroll from before the wrath of fire racing on the wings of the wind! Epilepsy so brief of horror, wherefore is it that thou canst not die? Passing so suddenly into darkness, wherefore is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral blights upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams? Fragment of music too passionate, heard once, and heard no more, what aileth thee, that thy deep rolling chords come up at intervals through all the worlds of sleep, and after forty years have lost no element of horror?

I

Lo, it is summer — almighty summer! The everlasting gates of life and summer are thrown open wide; and on the ocean, tranquil and verdant as a savannah, the unknown lady from the dreadful vision and I myself are floating — she upon a fairy pinnacle, and I upon an English three-decker. Both of us are wooing gales of festal happiness within the

¹ I read the course and changes of the lady's agony in the succession of her involuntary gestures; but it must be remembered that I read all this from the rear, never once catching the lady's full face, and even her profile imperfectly. (De Quincey's note.)

domain of our common country, within that ancient watery park, within the pathless chase of ocean, where England takes her pleasure as a huntress through winter and summer, from the rising to the setting sun. Ah, what a wilderness of floral beauty was hidden, or was suddenly revealed, upon the tropic islands through which the pinnacle moved! And upon her deck what a bevy of human flowers: young women how lovely, young men how noble, that were dancing together, and slowly drifting towards us amidst music and incense, amidst blossoms from forests and gorgeous corymbi² from vintages, amidst natural carolling, and the echoes of sweet girlish laughter. Slowly the pinnacle nears us, gaily she hails us, and silently she disappears beneath the shadow of our mighty bows. But then, as at some signal from heaven, the music, and the carols, and the sweet echoing of girlish laughter — all are hushed. What evil has smitten the pinnacle, meeting or overtaking her? Did ruin to our friends couch within our own dreadful shadow? Was our shadow the shadow of death? I looked over the bow for an answer, and, behold! the pinnacle was dismantled; the revel and the revellers were found no more; the glory of the vintage was dust; and the forests with their beauty were left without a witness upon the seas. "But where," and I turned to our crew — "where are the lovely women that danced beneath the awning of flowers and clustering corymbi? Whither have fled the noble young men that danced with them?" Answer there was none. But suddenly the man at the mast-head, whose countenance darkened with alarm, cried out, "Sail on the weather beam! Down she comes upon us; in seventy seconds she also will founder."

2

I looked to the weather side, and the summer had departed. The sea was rocking, and shaken with gathering wrath. Upon its surface sat mighty mists, which grouped themselves into arches and long cathedral aisles. Down one of these, with the fiery pace of a quarrel³ from a cross-bow, ran a frigate right athwart our course. "Are they mad?" some voice exclaimed from our deck. "Do they woo their ruin?" But in a moment, as she was close upon us, some impulse of a heady current or local vortex gave a wheeling bias to her course, and off she forged without a

¹ clusters of fruit or flowers.
² bolt, of a cross-bow.

shock. As she ran past us, high aloft amongst the shrouds stood the lady of the pinnacle. The deeps opened ahead in malice to receive her, towering surges of foam ran after her, the billows were fierce to catch her. But far away she was borne into desert spaces of the sea: whilst still by sight I followed her, as she ran before the howling gale, chased by angry sea-birds and by maddening billows; still I saw her, at the moment when she ran past us, standing amongst the shrouds, with her white draperies streaming before the wind. There she stood, with hair dishevelled, one hand clutched amongst the tackling — rising, sinking, fluttering, trembling, praying; there for leagues I saw her as she stood, raising at intervals one hand to heaven, amidst the fiery crests of the pursuing waves and the raving of the storm; until at last, upon a sound from afar of malicious laughter and mockery, all was hidden for ever in driving showers; and afterwards, but when I knew not, nor how.

3

Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance, wailing over the dead that die before the dawn, awakened me as I slept in a boat moored to some familiar shore. The morning twilight even then was breaking; and, by the dusky revelations which it spread, I saw a girl, adorned with a garland of white roses about her head for some great festival, running along the solitary strand in extremity of haste. Her running was the running of panic; and often she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear. But, when I leaped ashore, and followed on her steps to warn her of a peril in front, alas! from me she fled as from another peril, and vainly I shouted to her of quicksands that lay ahead. Faster and faster she ran; round a promontory of rocks she wheeled out of sight; in an instant I also wheeled round it, but only to see the treacherous sands gathering above her head. Already her person was buried; only the fair young head and the diadem of white roses around it were still visible to the pitying heavens; and, last of all, was visible one white marble arm. I saw by the early twilight this fair young head, as it was sinking down to darkness — saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and her treacherous grave, tossing, faltering, rising, clutching, as at some false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds — saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then uttering her dying despair. The head, the diadem, the arm

— these all had sunk; at last over these also the cruel quicksand had closed; and no memorial of the fair young girl remained on earth, except my own solitary tears, and the funeral bells from the desert seas, that, rising again more softly, sang a requiem over the grave of the buried child, and over her blighted dawn.

I sat, and wept in secret the tears that men have ever given to the memory of those that died before the dawn, and by the treachery of earth, our mother. But suddenly the tears and funeral bells were hushed by a shout as of many nations, and by a roar as from some great king's artillery, advancing rapidly along the valleys, and heard afar by echoes from the mountains. "Hush!" I said, as I bent my ear earthwards to listen — "hush! — this either is the very anarchy of strife, or else" — and then I listened more profoundly, and whispered as I raised my head — "or else, oh heavens! it is *victory* that is final, victory that swallows up all strife."

4

Immediately, in trance, I was carried over land and sea to some distant kingdom, and placed upon a triumphal car, amongst companions crowned with laurel. The darkness of gathering midnight, brooding over all the land, hid from us the mighty crowds that were weaving restlessly about ourselves as a centre: we heard them, but saw them not. Tidings had arrived, within an hour, of a grandeur that measured itself against centuries; too full of pathos they were, too full of joy, to utter themselves by other language than by tears, by restless anthems, and *Te Deums* reverberated from the choirs and orchestras of earth. These tidings we that sat upon the laurelled car had it for our privilege to publish amongst all nations. And already, by signs audible through the darkness, by snortings and trappings, our angry horses, that knew no fear or fleshly weariness, upbraided us with delay. Wherefore was it that we delayed? We waited for a secret word, that should bear witness to the hope of nations as now accomplished for ever. At midnight the secret word arrived; which word was — *Waterloo and Recovered Christendom!* The dreadful word shone by its own light; before us it went; high above our leaders' heads it rode, and spread a golden light over the paths which we traversed. Every city, at the presence of the secret word, threw open its gates. The rivers were conscious as we crossed. All the forests, as we ran along their

margins, shivered in homage to the secret word. And the darkness comprehended it.

Two hours after midnight we approached a mighty Minster. Its gates, which rose to the clouds, were closed. But, when the dreadful word that rode before us reached them with its golden light; silently they moved back upon their hinges; and at a flying gallop our equipage entered the grand aisle of the cathedral. Headlong was our pace; and at every altar, in the little chapels and oratories to the right hand and left of our course, the lamps, dying or sickening, kindled anew in sympathy with the secret word that was flying past. Forty leagues we might have run in the cathedral, and as yet no strength of morning light had reached us, when before us we saw the aerial galleries of organ and choir. Every pinnacle of fretwork, every station of advantage amongst the traceries, was crested by white-robed choristers that sang deliverance; that wept no more tears, as once their fathers had wept; but at intervals that sang together to the generations, saying,

"Chant the deliverer's praise in every tongue,"

and receiving answers from afar,

"Such as once in heaven and earth were sung."

And of their chanting was no end; of our headlong pace was neither pause nor slackening.

Thus we ran like torrents — thus as we swept with bridal rapture over the Campo Santo¹ of the cathedral graves — suddenly we became aware of a vast necropolis rising upon the far-off horizon — a city of sepulchres, built within the saintly cathedral for the warrior dead that rested from their feuds on earth. Of purple granite was the necropolis; yet, in the first minute, it lay like a purple stain upon the horizon, so mighty was the distance. In the second minute it trembled through many changes, growing into terraces and towers of wondrous altitude, so mighty was the pace. In the third minute already, with our dreadful gallop, we were entering its suburbs. Vast sarcophagi rose

on every side, having towers and turrets that, upon the limits of the central aisle, strode forward with haughty intrusion, that ran back with mighty shadows into answering recesses. Every sarcophagus showed many bas-reliefs — bas-reliefs of battles and of battle-fields; battles from forgotten ages, battles from yesterday; battle-fields that, long since, nature had healed and reconciled to herself with the sweet oblivion of flowers; battle-fields that were yet angry and crimson with carnage. Where the terraces ran, there did we run; where the towers curved, there did we curve. With the flight of swallows our horses swept round every angle. Like rivers in flood wheeling round headlands, like hurricanes that ride into the secrets of forests, faster than ever light unweave the mazes of darkness, our flying equipage carried earthly passions, kindled warrior instincts; amongst the dust that lay around us — dust oftentimes of our noble fathers that had slept in God from Cr  cy to Trafalgar. And now had we reached the last sarcophagus, now were we abreast of the last bas-relief, already had we recovered the arrow-like flight of the illimitable central aisle, when coming up this aisle to meet us we beheld afar off a female child, that rode in a carriage as frail as flowers. The mists which went before her hid the fawns that drew her, but could not hide the shells and tropic flowers with which she played — but could not hide the lovely smiles by which she uttered her trust in the mighty cathedral; and in the cherubim that looked down upon her from the mighty shafts of its pillars. Face to face she was meeting us; face to face she rode, as if danger there were none. Oh, "baby!" I exclaimed, "shalt thou be the ransom for Waterloo? Must we, that carry tidings of great joy to every people, be messengers of ruin to thee!" In horror I rose at the thought; but then also, in horror at the thought, rose one that was sculptured on a bas-relief — a Dying Trumpeter. Solemnly from the field of battle he rose to his feet; and, unslinging his stony trumpet, carried it, in his dying anguish, to his stony lips — sounding once, and yet once again; proclamation that, in *thy* ears, oh baby! spoke from the battlements of death. Immediately deep shadows fell between us, and aboriginal silence. The choir had ceased to sing. The hoofs of our horses, the dreadful rattle of our harness, the groaning of our wheels, alarmed the graves no more. By horror the bas-relief had been unlocked unto life. By horror we, that were

¹ It is probable that most of my readers will be acquainted with the history of the Campo Santo (or cemetery) at Pisa, composed of earth brought from Jerusalem from a bed of sanctity as the highest prize which the noble piety of crusaders could ask or imagine. To readers who are unacquainted with England, or who (being English) are yet unacquainted with the cathedral cities of England, it may be right to mention that the graves within-side the cathedrals often form a flat pavement over which carriages and horses *might* run; and perhaps a boyish remembrance of one particular cathedral, across which I had seen passengers walk and burdens carried, as about two centuries back they were through the middle of St. Paul's in London, may have assisted my dream. (De Quincey's note.)

so full of life, we men and our horses, with their fiery fore-legs rising in mid air to their everlasting gallop, were frozen to a bas-relief. Then a third time the trumpet sounded; the seals were taken off all pulses; life, and the frenzy of life, tore into their channels again; again the choir burst forth in sunny grandeur, as from the muffling of storms and darkness; again the thunderings of our horses carried temptation into the graves. One cry burst from our lips, as the clouds, drawing off from the aisle, showed it empty before us. — “Whither has the infant fled? — is the young child caught up to God?” Lo! afar off, in a vast recess, rose three mighty windows to the clouds; and on a level with their summits, at height insuperable to man, rose an altar of purest alabaster. On its eastern face was trembling a crimson glory. A glory was it from the reddening dawn that now streamed *through* the windows? Was it from the crimson robes of the martyrs painted *on* the windows? Was it from the bloody bas-reliefs of earth? There, suddenly, within that crimson radiance, rose the apparition of a woman’s head, and then of a woman’s figure. The child it was — grown up to woman’s height. Clinging to the horns of the altar, voiceless she stood — sinking, rising, raving, despairing; and behind the volume of incense that, night and day, streamed upwards from the altar, dimly was seen the fiery font, and the shadow of that dreadful being who should have baptized her with the baptism of death. But by her side was kneeling her better angel, that hid his face with wings; that wept and pleaded for *her*; that prayed when *she* could *not*; that fought with Heaven by tears for *her* deliverance; which also, as he raised his immortal countenance from his wings, I saw, by the glory in his eye, that from Heaven he had won at last.

5

Then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue. The golden tubes of the organ, which as yet had but muttered at intervals — gleaming amongst clouds and surges of incense — threw up, as from fountains unfathomable, columns of heart-shattering music. Choir and anti-choir were filling

fast with unknown voices. Thou also, Dying Trumpeter, with thy love that was victorious, and thy anguish that was finishing, didst enter the tumult; trumpet and echo — farewell love, and farewell anguish — rang through the dreadful *sanctus*. Oh, darkness of the grave! that from the crimson altar and from the fiery font wert visited and searched by the effulgence in the angel’s eye — were these indeed thy children? Poms of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, did ye indeed mingle with the festivals of Death? Lo! as I looked back for seventy leagues through the mighty cathedral, I saw the quick and the dead that sang together to God, together that sang to the generations of man. All the hosts of jubilation, like armies that ride in pursuit, moved with one step. Us, that, with laurelled heads, were passing from the cathedral, they overtook, and, as with a garment, they wrapped us round with thunders greater than our own. As brothers we moved together; to the dawn that advanced, to the stars that fled; rendering thanks to God in the highest — that, having hid His face through one generation behind thick clouds of War, once again was ascending, from the Campo Santo of Waterloo was ascending, in the visions of Peace; rendering thanks for thee, young girl! whom having overshadowed with His ineffable passion of death, suddenly did God relent, suffered thy angel to turn aside His arm, and even in thee, sister unknown! shown to me for a moment only to be hidden for ever, found an occasion to glorify His goodness. A thousand times, amongst the phantoms of sleep, have I seen thee entering the gates of the golden dawn, with the secret word riding before thee, with the armies of the grave behind thee, — seen thee sinking, rising, raving, despairing; a thousand times in the worlds of sleep have I seen thee followed by God’s angel through storms, through desert seas, through the darkness of quicksands, through dreams and the dreadful revelations that are in dreams; only that at the last, with one sling of His victorious arm, He might snatch thee back from ruin, and might emblazon in thy deliverance the endless resurrections of His love!

THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

The later nineteenth century is a period of rapid change in the social fabric of the English people. With the extension of machinery, production in every department showed an enormous increase, and population doubled and trebled. This mass of human beings demanded education and entertainment, and accordingly the function of literature became greatly enlarged. They demanded, also, a share in the government. The Reform Bill of 1832 had extended the franchise to the upper industrial class. After its passage the workers organized a campaign for a more popular government, with universal suffrage, and a Parliament elected every three years. These demands were embodied in the People's Charter, whence came the name "Chartism." Although as an attempt at mass action Chartism failed, its aims have been gradually achieved. Another popular movement was that for the repeal of the duties on foodstuffs, imposed by the so-called "Corn Laws," which were levied in the interest of the landowning agricultural class and kept the industrial population on the verge of starvation. They were repealed in 1845. Soon afterwards free trade was extended to nearly all commodities, and English manufacture and trade increased more rapidly than ever. This industrial activity demanded new markets, which were secured by extending the British Empire in Asia and Africa, by penetration, colonization, and conquest. There continued to be great misery among the workers in mine and factory, and the labor of small children was necessary to support the family. Factory legislation gradually cured the worst evils, and the workers themselves organized trade unions which gave them an opportunity to check, by collective bargaining, the exploitation of capitalism.

These and similar movements are clearly reflected in the literature of the period. The great advance in prosperity of the middle class and the multiplication of material comforts made possible by machinery contributed to a sense of well-being, of pride in wealth, of belief in progress through mechanical inventions and social organization. The most eloquent representative of this complacency was Lord Macaulay. Later in the century we find a corresponding pride in the increasing extent and power of the Empire, of which Rudyard Kipling was the exponent. On the other hand, the sense that this prosperity and power were paid for by the misery of the working class, that revolution was imminent in the mass demonstrations when the Chartists took their monster petitions to Parliament, was the burden of the urgent prophecies of Thomas Carlyle. The suffering of the poor was a theme in Dickens's work and in the poetry of Mrs. Browning. The injury to the natural beauty of the country caused by the growth of cities, with factories and railroads, and the decline in taste for beauty of workmanship under mass production were subjects of bitter protest by John Ruskin and William Morris. The vulgarity, as well as the selfishness of a society devoted to material ends and contented with mechanical triumphs was denounced by these writers and by Matthew Arnold, all of whom asserted the claims of the spiritual life upon the individual, and of art and beauty upon society, to be achieved only through the establishment of social justice.

There are to be discerned in this period two marked tendencies, which defined themselves at the time of the French Revolution. On the one hand were those who believed in the application of intelligence to human affairs, who held that social problems were to be solved by democracy, that is, by giving the people control over the government and educating them to use their power for their own welfare. This trust in intelligence was characteristic of the Liberals; its classic expression is to be found in John Stuart Mill's tract on *Liberty*. On the other hand were those who felt that the unconscious, non-intellectual elements in human nature, often called instincts, were more in harmony with the underlying forces which moved the world. Carlyle was their leader. Their doctrine of the spiritual nature of man and the universe made them skeptical or scornful of the triumphs of machinery, education, and democracy, to which the Liberal pointed as signs of progress. "What shall it profit a man," they asked, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The intellectual attitude of the century was profoundly influenced by the scientific discoveries which led up to the promulgation of the theory of evolution in Darwin's *Origin of Species*, in 1859. This linking of man in his natural history to the lower animals had a disturbing influence on belief in revealed religion. One of the chief themes in nineteenth-century poetry and fiction is this decline in religious faith and its tragic consequences to the individual and to society. This idea of man's evolution became the intellectual background for thought on social and ethical themes, even of writers like Walter Pater and R. L. Stevenson, whose interests were largely æsthetic. On the other hand, the Church was aroused from its lethargy to meet this new foe. About the time of the passage of the Reform Bill a movement began at Oxford for the revival of spiritual power in the Church of England, led by John Henry Newman. The Oxford Movement, as it is called,

emphasized the historical inheritance of Anglicanism in the Church of the Middle Ages. Many of its adherents, including Newman himself, were led to join the Roman Catholic Church. Newman's followers in the Anglo-Catholic Movement became the dominant party within the Church of England. Both churches gained in spiritual and social force: and to this revival is to be traced a group of religious poets, chief among whom is Francis Thompson, unequalled since the seventeenth century.

The great prose writers of the late nineteenth century reflected in their lives the growing seriousness of the age. They began their work with the literary and philosophical inheritance of romanticism, and gradually subordinated their individual interests to the social necessities of the time. Carlyle, a critic of literature, became a historian and critic of society. Ruskin turned from art criticism to political economy. Matthew Arnold's early romantic verse gave place to the grave poetry of religious doubt, and to the prose of social criticism. This is true of the poets also. Tennyson's early master was Keats, and his early verse, chiefly sensuous and decorative. His later history is an effort to deal with problems of the day, sometimes in allegory and symbol as in *The Princess* and the *Idylls of the King*, sometimes in the realism of *Dora* and *Aylmer's Field*. Browning's early master was Shelley. He likewise turned from the romantic studies of the individual, in *Pauline*, *Paracelsus*, and *Sordello*, to problems of men and women in social bonds, as in *The Ring and the Book*. Mrs. Browning's transition from *The Seraphim* to *Aurora Leigh*, and William Morris's from *The Earthly Paradise* to his propaganda for socialism, are even more striking. The effort of Victorian poetry to escape from its romantic inheritance, to deal with realities, and share in the social burden of the time is a long descent from Parnassus.

There is one apparent exception to the general course of Victorian poetry. That is the pre-Raphaelite Movement. This owed its impulse largely to the Oxford Movement, with its revival of the mediæval spirit of religious sincerity. The pre-Raphaelites, led by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, found a corresponding sincerity in art in the painters and poets who came before the Renaissance in Italy. The pre-Raphaelites were interested in æsthetic matters; they looked for their themes to mediæval and early Christian stories; they were not concerned with social problems. Yet they contributed, in Christina Rossetti, to the revival of religious poetry of the later century; and their admiration of mediæval ideals carried Ruskin and Morris into their attempts to revive mediæval craftsmanship, and thence to restore the social conditions out of which that craftsmanship grew. In the main, however, the pre-Raphaelite Movement was a romantic escape from the serious pre-occupation with society which absorbed much of the energy of the time. It furnished a sort of æsthetic background for a poet such as Swinburne, whose inspiration was purely literary, for the neo-pagan philosophy of Walter Pater, and for the various eccentricities of the mood of protest against Victorian seriousness which marked the last decade of the century.

The novel was for many reasons the most popular form of prose in the nineteenth century. It was a free form, unsubjected to definite rules; it lent itself readily to the journalistic interests of the day; for both reasons it was agreeable to the new public of uncritical readers. The Victorian novel, like poetry, had to disembarass itself from the romantic inheritance. The success of Scott in the Waverley novels at first threatened to dominate fiction for an indefinite time. Other modes of popularity in time succeeded the historical interest, but down to the close of the century nearly every novelist chose to write his intended masterpiece in the historical form. The fiction-reading public built up by Scott was accustomed to romance, and his successors, Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton, and others, sought it in various fields.

The next great reputation in fiction to Scott's was that of Charles Dickens (1812-70). Dickens began by using a humble popular form, the narrative of adventures of characters who find themselves in various incongruous situations, more or less humorous. He thus came to write *Pickwick Papers*. For more serious fiction he drew characters, mainly children, who are victims of some private vice or institutional cruelty. His novels were an important influence in the redress of social wrongs which the industrial system had aggravated. For romantic appeal he replaced the terror of the supernatural by that of lawlessness, of crime and mobs. In so doing Dickens could claim to be a realist, but his effort was always to present the romantic elements of real life. He effected a great democratic revolution in the publication of fiction by issuing his novels in monthly installments at a shilling each, instead of in three volumes at a guinea and a half. This periodical form of publication tempted W. M. Thackeray (1811-63), who had a reputation as a writer of essays and sketches, to throw his material into a novel, whence came *Vanity Fair* (1846), a panorama of English society in the first half of the century. Thackeray was a more thoroughgoing realist than Dickens; he worked in the spirit of Fielding in his next novel *Pendennis* (1848). His masterpiece *Henry Esmond* (1852) is one of the best pictures of the eighteenth century imaginable. The third in the trio of great nineteenth-century novelists is Mary Ann Evans (1819-80) who is known by her pen name of George Eliot. She began to write fiction about the time when the decline of faith in supernatural religion seemed to threaten the very basis of morality. George Eliot wrote to show that the principle of right conduct was implicit in the human soul, in a spirit of self-renunciation and unselfish service of others. These ideals, which reflect the spirit of Carlyle, are set forth in *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Romola* (1863), *Middlemarch* (1872).

Two novelists whose reputations fill the closing years of the century, George Meredith (1828-1909) and Thomas Hardy (1841-1928) offer interesting illustration of the opposition above noted, between the school of thought which emphasizes conscious intelligence, and that which regards the unconscious forces as more important in human life. Meredith held that evolution, having produced man as a physical being, would continue to raise him to higher power as an intellectual one. His poetry expresses this faith: "Never is earth misread by brain." Hardy's view of life rested upon the same revelation of the world by science as Meredith's, to which, however, it is totally opposed. Hardy pictures man as controlled by blind forces of which intelligence merely serves to make him tragically aware. The happiest are the unconscious, simple souls, who resign themselves to fate. Hardy's most distinctive characters are his simple-minded peasants.

There was much to justify the mood of pessimism which settled down upon the late nineteenth century, of which Hardy's novels are typical. Industry destroyed the natural beauty of the parts of the world in which most of the great population which had been called into existence was obliged to live. It killed the primary source of satisfaction for most men, their joy in their work. As life in the present world became more bitter, faith grew weaker in a world to come. The great hopes entertained of science and intellectual progress, of the happiness of man through the extension of his control over Nature and through the intelligent organization of society, seemed doomed to disappointment. Many of the poets of the period reflect this discouragement, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Morris, Swinburne, James Thompson, as well as Carlyle, Ruskin, and George Eliot. These great Victorians were all deeply serious in their outlook on life. In the last decade of the century, this seriousness gave way to a mood of indifference to the social problems of mankind, a disposition to escape from them by way of æsthetic interests, to find satisfaction in art for its own sake. This mood has something in common with the pre-Raphaelite Movement. It gave rise to much invention in forms of verse as in the other arts. Its philosophy was Walter Pater's Epicureanism. At the same time Browning with his instinctive optimism was gaining in popularity, as was Meredith with his more intellectual faith. Against the Epicureanism of Pater, there was the Stoicism of Stevenson and Henley. There was a revival of religious poetry. Altogether, the decade of the nineties was one of those periods in which no general tendency can be discerned among the many cross and shifting currents, a period to which the term "decadence" is often applied.

The student will find the following works useful: *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vols. XIII and XIV; H. D. Traill, *Social England*, Vol. VI; O. Elton, *Survey of English Literature*, Vols. III and IV; G. Saintsbury, *History of Nineteenth Century Literature*; A. H. Thorndike, *Literature in a Changing Age*; Hugh Walker, *Literature in the Victorian Era*; G. K. Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature*; J. W. Cunliffe, *English Literature during the Last Half Century*; Emery Neff, *Carlyle and Mill*; Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen-Nineties*; W. L. Cross, *The Development of the English Novel*.

THOMAS CARLYLE (1795-1881)

Thomas Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, Annandale, December 4, 1795. He was sent to the Annan grammar school, and thence to the University of Edinburgh, to prepare for the ministry. He taught school at Annan and at Kircaldy, became a private tutor for a time, and then turned to literature. In 1826 he married Jane Welsh and shortly afterwards went to the remote farm of Craigenputtock, where for six years he struggled with farming and literature. Here Emerson visited him, and the friendship began which was to be an important influence in the lives of both, bringing Carlyle into contact with the Transcendentalists in Massachusetts, and securing to him returns from the American publication of his books. In 1834 he moved to London and took up his residence at 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea. Here he remained during the long remainder of his life, gathering about him a circle of younger men whose guide and philosopher he became — Tennyson, Ruskin, Browning, Dickens, Thackeray, John Sterling, Clough; and seeing visitors from America — Emerson, Norton, Alcott, and Margaret Fuller. The personal influence of Carlyle upon his contemporaries is one of the most important facts in the history of English literature in the century. In 1876 he was elected Rector of the University of Edinburgh. It was while he was in Scotland to receive this honor that Mrs. Carlyle died. His death occurred in 1881.

Carlyle's earliest writings had to do with literature. He learned German at a time when few Englishmen knew that language, and became a translator and interpreter of Goethe, Schiller, Richter, and others. He wrote also essays for the *Edinburgh Review* on his own countrymen, Burns, Scott, and Boswell's *Johnson*. He was, however, essentially a teacher and prophet rather than a literary critic. While a student at Edinburgh he passed through a spiritual crisis from which he emerged with an unshakable faith in the spiritual reality of the universe underneath its material appearance. Thenceforth he inclined more and more to dealing with life directly rather

than with literature. His essay on *Characteristics* (1831) contains the substance of his teaching, his distrust of reason, and his reliance on intuition for the revelation of truth necessary to the individual and society. *Sartor Resartus*, his spiritual autobiography, was published in 1834. History as the record of life in the past was to him the most important of subjects, and history in his view consisted of the essence of innumerable biographies, and was the story of what great men had accomplished in the world. His *History of the French Revolution* was written in the years after his arrival in London and published in 1837. Then followed *Past and Present* (1843), *The Letters and Speeches of Cromwell* (1845), and a long history of *Frederick the Great*, finished in 1865. In the meantime Carlyle wrote the *Life of John Sterling* (1851) and a series of essays entitled *Latter Day Pamphlets* (1850), in which he expressed violently his distrust and dislike of political democracy, extension of the suffrage, and various reforms which to him seemed to represent mere superficial exercises of the mind. The bitterness of Carlyle's scorn alienated many of his friends, but his Inaugural Address at Edinburgh had a wide appeal as an eloquent and beautiful summing up of his message to his time.

The complete works of Carlyle are published in many editions, notably the Ashburton, by Chapman and Hall. A critical edition of *Sartor Resartus* is that by Archibald MacMechan in the Athenæum Press series. *Sartor Resartus* and *Heroes and Hero Worship* form a volume in Everyman's Library, which includes also several other works. The standard biography is that by J. A. Froude, who also edited Carlyle's *Reminiscences*. A new *Life* by David Alec Wilson has reached its fifth volume. Short Lives are those by John Nichol in the English Men of Letters and Richard Garnett in the Great Writers series.

SARTOR RESARTUS

1834

In 1831 Carlyle, then at Craigenputtock, wrote, "Am engaged on a strange piece on clothes. Know not what will come of it." This was the germ of *Sartor Resartus*, which was published in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1834, and in book form in Boston two years later. The book consists of supposed autobiographical fragments of Professor Teufelsdröckh of Weissenichtwo, which Carlyle supposes himself obliged to arrange and publish with explanatory comments. The title of the book, *The Tailor Reclothed*, has reference to a humorous philosophy of Professor Teufelsdröckh, according to which the opinions of men are likened to the clothes which they put on or off, change and renew — doubtless a reminiscence of Swift's satire in *A Tale of a Tub*. The experience and philosophy are those of Carlyle himself. The chapters here given narrate an episode, as Carlyle says quite literally, which occurred to him in Leith Walk, Edinburgh. In deep spiritual discouragement, "without hope and God in the world," he suddenly realized the strength of his own unconquerable soul. This sense of personality was the basis of Carlyle's faith. It was strengthened by sacrifice and work. It became the source of a mystic faith in the spiritual nature of the universe which is developed in the further chapter, on Natural Supernaturalism.

Sartor Resartus is written in a style distinguished by strange words placed in unusual order for emphasis, an explosive rather than a sustained rhythmic style. Carlyle excuses it by reference to his original which he is supposed to be translating, but in fact it is the style which he made thereafter his own, a style suited to the burden of his utterance, which was of the nature of Hebrew prophecy.

BOOK II

CHAPTER VII

THE EVERLASTING NO

Under the strange nebulous envelopment, wherein our Professor has now shrouded himself, no doubt but his spiritual nature is nevertheless progressive, and growing: for how can the "Son of Time," in any case, stand still? We behold him, through those dim years, in a state of crisis, of transition: his mad Pilgrimages, and general solution into aimless Discontinuity, what is all this but a mad Fermentation; wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself?

Such transitions are ever full of pain: thus the Eagle when he molts is sickly; and, to attain his new beak, must harshly dash-off the old one upon rocks. What Stoicism soever our Wanderer, in his individual acts and motions, may affect, it is clear that there is a hot fever of anarchy and misery raging within; coruscations of which flash out: as, indeed, how could there be other? Have we not seen him disappointed, bemocked of Destiny, through long years? All that the young heart might desire and pray for has been denied; nay, as in the last worst instance, offered and then snatched away. Ever an "excellent Passivity"; but of useful, reasonable Activity, essential to the former as Food to Hunger, nothing granted: till at length, in this wild Pilgrimage, he must forcibly seize for himself an Activity, though useless, unreasonable. Alas, his cup of bitterness, which had been filling drop by

drop, ever since that first "ruddy morning" in the Hinterschlag Gymnasium, was at the very lip; and then with that poison-drop, of the Towgood-and-Blumine business, it runs over, and even hisses over in a deluge of foam.

He himself says once, with more justice than originality: "Man is, properly speaking, based upon Hope, he has no other possession but Hope; this world of his is emphatically the 'Place of Hope.'" What, then, was our Professor's possession? We see him, for the present, quite shut-out from Hope; looking not into the golden orient, but vaguely all round into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado.

Alas, shut-out from Hope, in a deeper sense than we yet dream of! For, as he wanders wearisomely through this world, he has now lost all tidings of another and higher. Full of religion, or at least of religiosity, as our Friend has since exhibited himself, he hides not that, in those days, he was wholly irreligious: "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief," says he; "shade after shade goes grimly over your soul, till you have the fixed, starless, Tartarean black." To such readers as have reflected, what can be called reflecting, on man's life, and happily discovered, in contradiction to much Profit-and-Loss Philosophy, speculative and practical, that Soul is *not* synonymous with Stomach; who understand, therefore, in our Friend's words, "that, for man's well-being, Faith is properly the one thing needful; how, with it, Martyrs, otherwise weak, can cheerfully endure the shame and the cross; and without it, Worldlings puke-up their sick existence, by suicide, in the midst of luxury"; to such it will be clear that, for a pure moral nature, the loss of his religious Belief was the loss of everything. Unhappy young man! All wounds, the crush of long-continued Destitution, the stab of false Friendship and of false Love, all wounds in thy so genial heart, would have healed again, had not its life-warmth been withdrawn. Well might he exclaim, in his wild way: "Is there no God, then; but at best an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his Universe, and seeing it go? Has the word Duty no meaning; is what we call Duty no divine Messenger and Guide, but a false earthly Fantasm, made-up of Desire and Fear, of emanations from the Gallows and from Doctor Graham's¹ Celestial-Bed? Happiness of an approving Conscience! Did

not Paul of Tarsus, whom admiring men have since named Saint, feel that *he* was 'the chief of sinners'; and Nero of Rome, jocund in spirit (*wohlgemuth*), spend much of his time in fiddling? Foolish Wordmonger and Motive-grinder, who in thy Logic-mill hast an earthly mechanism for the Godlike itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from the husks of Pleasure, — I tell thee, Nay! To the unregenerate Prometheus Vincitus of a man, it is ever the bitterest aggravation of his wretchedness that he is conscious of Virtue, that he feels himself the victim not of suffering only, but of injustice. What then? Is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble of the blood, bubbling in the direction others profit by? I know not: only this I know, If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. With Stupidity and sound Digestion man may front much. But what, in these dull unimaginative days, are the terrors of Conscience to the diseases of the Liver! Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold: there brandishing our frying-pan, as censor, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *he* has provided for his Elect!"

Thus has the bewildered Wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question into the Sibyl cave of Destiny, and receive no Answer but an Echo. It is all a grim Desert, this once-fair world of his; wherein is heard only the howling of wild-beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by day, and no Pillar of Fire by night, any longer guides the Pilgrim. To such length has the spirit of Inquiry carried him. "But what boots it (*was thut's*)?" cries he: "it is but the common lot in this era. Not having come to spiritual majority prior to the *Siecle de Louis Quinze*, and not being born purely a Loghead (*Dummkopf*), thou hadst no other outlook. The whole world is, like thee, sold to Unbelief; their old Temples of the Godhead, which for long have not been rainproof, crumble down; and men ask now: where is the Godhead; our eyes never saw him?"

Pitiful enough were it, for all these wild utterances, to call our Diogenes wicked. Unprofitable servants as we all are, perhaps at no era of his life was he more decisively the Servant of Goodness, the Servant of God, than even now when doubting God's existence. "One circumstance I note," says he: "after all the nameless woe that Inquiry,

¹ A famous quack doctor.

which for me, what it is not always, was genuine Love of Truth, had wrought me, I nevertheless still loved Truth, and would bate no jot of my allegiance to her. 'Truth!' I cried, 'though the Heavens crush me for following her: no Falsehood! though a whole celestial Lubberland were the price of Apostasy.' In conduct it was the same. Had a divine Messenger from the clouds, or miraculous Handwriting on the wall, convincingly proclaimed to me *This thou shalt do*, with what passionate readiness, as I often thought, would I have done it, had it been leaping into the infernal Fire. Thus, in spite of all Motive-grinders, and Mechanical Profit-and-Loss Philosophies, with the sick ophthalmia and hallucination they had brought on, was the Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present to me: living without God in the world, of God's light I was not utterly bereft; if my as yet sealed eyes, with their unspeakable longing, could nowhere see Him, nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law still stood legible and sacred there."

Meanwhile, under all these tribulations, and temporal and spiritual destitutions, what must the Wanderer, in his silent soul, have endured! "The painfullest feeling," writes he, "is that of your own Feebleness (*Unkraft*):³⁰ ever, as the English Milton says, to be weak is the true misery. And yet of your Strength there is and can be no clear feeling, save by what you have prospered in, by what you have done. Between vague wavering³⁵ Capability and fixed indubitable Performance, what a difference! A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments. Hence, too, the folly of that impossible Precept, *Know thyself*;¹ till it be translated into this partially possible one, *Know what thou canst work at*.

"But for me, so strangely unprosperous had I been, the net-result of my Workings amounted as yet simply to — Nothing. How then could I believe in my Strength, when there was as yet no mirror to see it in? Ever⁵⁰ did this agitating, yet, as I now perceive, quite frivolous question, remain to me insoluble: Hast thou a certain Faculty, a certain Worth, such even as the most have not; or art thou the completest Dullard of these modern times? Alas, the fearful Un-

belief is unbelief in yourself; and how could I believe? Had not my first, last Faith in myself, when even to me the Heavens seemed laid open, and I dared to love, been all-too cruelly belied? The speculative Mystery of Life grew ever more mysterious to me: neither in the practical Mystery had I made the slightest progress, but been everywhere buffeted, foiled, and contemptuously cast out. A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening Infinitude, I seemed to have nothing given me but eyes, whereby to discern my own wretchedness. Invisible yet impenetrable walls, as of Enchantment, divided me from all living: was there, in the wide world, any true bosom I could press trustfully to mine? O Heaven, No, there was none! I kept a lock upon my lips: why should I speak much with that shifting variety of so-called Friends, in whose withered, vain and too-hungry souls Friendship was but an incredible tradition? In such cases, your resource is to talk little, and that little mostly from the Newspapers. Now when I look²⁵ back, it was a strange isolation I then lived in. The men and women around me, even speaking with me, were but Figures; I had, practically, forgotten that they were alive, that they were not merely automatic. In the midst of their crowded streets and assemblages, I walked solitary; and (except as it was my own heart, not another's, that I kept devouring) savage also, as the tiger in his jungle. Some comfort it would have been, could I, like a Faust, have fancied myself tempted and tormented of the Devil; for a Hell, as I imagine, without Life, though only diabolic Life, were more frightful: but in our age of Down-pulling and Disbelief, the very Devil has been pulled down, you cannot so much as believe in a Devil. To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility: it was one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling⁴⁵ on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O, the vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha,² and Mill of Death! Why was the Living banished thither companionless, conscious? Why, if there is no Devil; nay, unless the Devil is your God?"

A prey incessantly to such corrosions, might not, moreover, as the worst aggravation to them, the iron constitution even of a Teufelsdröckh threaten to fail? We conjecture that he has known sickness; and, in spite of his locomotive habits, perhaps sickness of the chronic sort. Hear this, for ex-

¹ Maxim of Solon inscribed over the portico of the temple of Delphi.

² St. Matthew xxvii, 33.

ample: "How beautiful to die of broken-heart, on Paper! Quite another thing in practice; every window of your Feeling, even of your Intellect, as it were, begrimed and mud-bespattered, so that no pure ray can enter; a whole Drugshop in your inwards; the fordone soul drowning slowly in quagmires of Disgust!"

Putting all which external and internal miseries together, may we not find in the following sentences, quite in our Professor's still vein, significance enough? "From Suicide a certain aftershine (*Nachtschein*) of Christianity withheld me: perhaps also a certain indolence of character; for, was not that a remedy I had at any time within reach? Often, however, was there a question present to me: Should some one now, at the turning of that corner, blow thee suddenly out of Space, into the other World, or other No-world, by pistol-shot,—how were it? On which ground, too, I often, in seastorms and sieged cities and other death-scenes, exhibited an imperturbability, which passed, falsely enough, for courage."

"So had it lasted," concludes the Wanderer, "so had it lasted as in bitter protracted Death-agony, through long years. The heart within me, unvisited by any heavenly dew-drop was smoldering in sulphurous, slow-consuming fire. Almost since earliest memory I had shed no tear; or once only when I, murmuring half-audibly, recited Faust's Death-song, that wild *Selig der den er im Siegesglanze findet* (Happy whom he finds in Battle's splendor), and thought that of this last Friend even I was not forsaken, that Destiny itself could not doom me not to die. Having no hope, neither had I any definite fear, were it of Man or of Devil: nay, I often felt as if it might be solacing, could the Arch-Devil himself, though in Tartarean terrors, but rise to me, that I might tell him a little of my mind. And yet, strangely enough, I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear; tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what; it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath would hurt me; as if the Heavens and the Earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited, to be devoured."

"Full of such humor, and perhaps the miserablest man in the whole French Capital or Suburbs, was I, one sultry Dogday, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*, among civic rubbish enough, in a close atmosphere,

and over pavements hot as Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace; whereby doubtless my spirits were little cheered; when, all at once, there rose a Thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What art thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow was it, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance."

"Thus had the EVERLASTING NO (*das ewige Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my ME; and then was it that my whole ME stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'

"It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometric Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man."

CHAPTER VIII

CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE

Though, after this "Baphometric Fire-baptism" of his, our Wanderer signifies that his Unrest was but increased; as, indeed, "Indignation and Defiance," especially against things in general, are not the most peaceable inmates; yet can the Psychologist surmise that it was no longer a quite hopeless Unrest; that henceforth it had at least a fixed centre to revolve round. For the fire-baptized soul, long so scathed and thunder-

1 From Baphomet, the imaginary idol or symbol which the Templars were accused of worshipping.

riven, here feels its own Freedom, which feeling is its Baphometric Baptism: the citadel of its whole kingdom it has thus gained by assault, and will keep inexpugnable; outwards from which the remaining dominions, not indeed without hard battling, will doubtless by degrees be conquered and pacified. Under another figure, we might say, if in that great moment, in the *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*, the old inward Satanic School was not yet thrown out of doors, it received peremptory judicial notice to quit; — whereby, for the rest, its howl-chantings, Ernulphus's cursings, and rebellious gnashings of teeth, might, in the meanwhile, become only the more tumultuous, and difficult to keep secret.

Accordingly, if we scrutinize these Pilgrimages well, there is perhaps discernible henceforth a certain incipient method in their madness. Not wholly as a Spectre does Teufelsdröckh now storm through the world; at worst as a spectre-fighting Man, nay who will one day be a Spectre-queller. If pilgriming restlessly to so many "Saints' Wells," and ever without quenching of his thirst, he nevertheless finds little secular wells, whereby from time to time some alleviation is ministered. In a word, he is now, if not ceasing, yet intermitting to "eat his own heart"; and clutches round him outwardly on the NOT-ME for wholesomer food. Does not the following glimpse exhibit him in a much more natural state?

"Towns also and Cities, especially the ancient, I failed not to look upon with interest. How beautiful to see thereby, as through a long vista, into the remote Time; to have as it were, an actual section of almost the earliest Past brought safe into the Present, and set before your eyes! There, in that old City, was a live ember of Culinary Fire put down, say only two-thousand years ago; and there, burning more or less triumphantly, with such fuel as the region yielded, it has burnt, and still burns, and thou thyself seest the very smoke thereof. Ah! and the far more mysterious live ember of Vital Fire was then also put down there; and still miraculously burns and spreads; and the smoke and ashes thereof (in these Judgment-Halls and Church-yards), and its bellows-engines (in these Churches), thou still seest; and its flame, looking out from every kind countenance, and every hateful one, still warms thee or scorches thee.

"Of Man's Activity and Attainment the

1 The curse is given in *Tristram Shandy*, III, xi.

chief results are aeriform, mystic, and preserved in Tradition only: such are his Forms of Government, with the Authority they rest on; his Customs, or Fashions both of Cloth-habits and of Soul-habits; much more his collective stock of Handicrafts, the whole Faculty he has acquired of manipulating Nature: all these things, as indispensable and priceless as they are, cannot in any way be fixed under lock and key, but must flit, spirit-like, on impalpable vehicles, from Father to Son; if you demand sight of them, they are nowhere to be met with. Visible Plowmen and Hammermen there have been, ever from Cain and Tubalcain downwards: but where does your accumulated Agricultural, Metallurgic, and other Manufacturing SKILL lie warehoused? It transmits itself on the atmospheric air, on the sun's rays (by Hearing and by Vision); it is a thing aeriform, impalpable, of quite spiritual sort. In like manner, ask me not, Where are the LAWS; where is the GOVERNMENT? In vain wilt thou go to Schönbrunn, to Downing Street, to the Palais Bourbon: thou findest nothing there but brick or stone houses, and some bundles of Papers tied with tape. Where, then, is that same cunningly-devised almighty GOVERNMENT of theirs to be laid hands on? Everywhere, yet nowhere: seen only in its works, this too is a thing aeriform, invisible; or if you will, mystic and miraculous. So spiritual (*geistig*) is our whole daily Life: all that we do springs out of Mystery, Spirit, invisible Force; only like a little Cloud-image, or Armida's Palace,¹ air-built, does the Actual body itself forth from the great mystic Deep.

"Visible and tangible products of the Past, again, I reckon-up to the extent of three. Cities, with their Cabinets and Arsenals; then tilled Fields, to either or to both of which divisions Roads with their Bridges, may belong; and thirdly — Books. In which third truly, the last invented, lies a worth far surpassing that of the two others. Wondrous indeed is the virtue of a true Book. Not like a dead city of stones, yearly crumbling, yearly needing repair; more like a tilled field, but then a spiritual field: like a spiritual tree, let me rather say, it stands from year to year, and from age to age (we have Books that already number some hundred-and-fifty human ages); and yearly comes its new produce of leaves (Commentaries, Deductions, Philosophical, Political Systems; or

1 The palace of an enchantress in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, bk. 16.

were it only Sermons, Pamphlets, Journalistic Essays), every one of which is talismanic and thaumaturgic, for it can persuade men. O thou who art able to write a Book, which once in the two centuries or oftener there is a man gifted to do, envy not him whom they name City-builder, and inexpressibly pity him whom they name Conqueror or City-burner! Thou too art a Conqueror and Victor; but of the true sort, namely over the Devil: thou too hast built what will outlast all marble and metal, and be a wonder-bringing City of the Mind, a Temple and Seminary and Prophetic Mount, whereto all kindreds of the Earth will pilgrim. — Fool! why journeyest thou wearisomely, in thy antiquarian fervor, to gaze on the stone pyramids of Geeza, or the clay ones of Sacchara? These stand there, as I can tell thee, idle and inert, looking over the Desert, foolishly enough, for the last three-thousand years: but canst thou not open thy Hebrew Bible, then, or even Luther's Version thereof?"

No less satisfactory is his sudden appearance not in Battle, yet on some Battle-field; which, we soon gather, must be that of Wagram; so that here, for once, is a certain approximation to distinctiveness of date. Omitting much, let us impart what follows:

"Horrible enough! A whole Marchfeld strewn with shell-splinters, cannon-shot, ruined tumbrils, and dead men and horses; stragglers still remaining not so much as buried. And those red mould heaps: ay, there lie the Shells of Men, out of which all the Life and Virtue has been blown; and now are they swept together, and crammed-down out of sight, like blown Egg-shells! — Did Nature, when she bade the Donau bring down his mould-cargoes from the Carinthian and Carpathian Heights, and spread them out here into the softest, richest level, — intend thee, O Marchfeld, for a corn-bearing Nursery, whereon her children might be nursed; or for a Cockpit, wherein they might the more commodiously be throttled and tattered? Were thy three broad Highways, meeting here from the ends of Europe, made for Ammunition-wagons, then? Were thy Wagrams and Stillfrieds but so many ready-built Casemates, wherein the house of Hapsburg might batter with artillery, and with artillery be battered? König Ottokar, amid yonder hillocks, dies under Rodolf's truncheon; here Kaiser Franz falls a-swoon under

Napoleon's: within which five centuries, to omit the others, how has thy breast, fair Plain, been defaced and defiled! The green-sward is torn-up and trampled-down; man's fond care of it, his fruit-trees, hedge-rows, and pleasant dwellings, blown away with gunpowder; and the kind seedfield lies a desolate, hideous Place of Skulls. — Nevertheless, Nature is at work; neither shall these Powder-Devilkins with their utmost devilry gainsay her: but all that gore and carnage will be shrouded-in, absorbed into manure; and next year the Marchfeld will be green, nay greener. Thrifty unwearied Nature, ever out of our great waste educing some little profit of thy own, — how dost thou, from the very carcass of the Killer, bring Life for the Living!

"What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net-purport and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five-hundred souls. From these, by certain 'Natural Enemies' of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men: Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them: she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two-thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot, in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending: till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given: and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their Governors had fallen-out; and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make

1 A decisive battle between the Emperor, Rudolph of Hapsburg, and Ottokar, King of Bohemia, fought in 1278.

these poor blockheads shoot. — Alas, so is it in Deutschland, and hitherto in all other lands; still as of old, 'what devilry soever Kings do, the Greeks must pay the piper!' — In that fiction of the English Smollett, it is true, the final Cessation of War is perhaps prophetically shadowed forth; where the two Natural Enemies, in person, take each a Tobacco-pipe, filled with Brimstone; light the same, and smoke in one another's faces, till the weaker gives in; but from such predicted Peace-Era, what blood-filled trenches, and contentious centuries, may still divide us!"

Thus can the Professor, at least in lucid intervals, look away from his own sorrows, over the many-colored world, and pertinently enough note what is passing there. We may remark, indeed, that for the matter of spiritual culture, if for nothing else, perhaps few periods of his life were richer than this. Internally, there is the most momentous instructive Course of Practical Philosophy, with Experiments, going on; towards the right comprehension of which his Peripatetic habits, favorable to Meditation, might help him rather than hinder. Externally, again, as he wanders to and fro, there are, if for the longing heart little substance, yet for the seeing eye sights enough: in these so boundless Travels of his, granting that the Satanic School was even partially kept down, what an incredible knowledge of our Planet, and its Inhabitants and their Works, that is to say, of all knowable things, might not Teufelsdröckh acquire!

"I have read in most Public Libraries," says he, "including those of Constantinople and Samarcand: in most Colleges, except the Chinese Mandarin ones, I have studied, or seen that there was no studying. Unknown Languages have I oftentimes gathered from their natural repertory, the Air, by my organ of Hearing; Statistics, Geographics, Topographics came, through the Eye, almost of their own accord. The ways of Man, how he seeks food, and warmth, and protection for himself, in most regions, are ocularly known to me. Like the great Hadrian, I meted-out much of the terraqueous Globe with a pair of Compasses that belonged to myself only.

"Of great Scenes why speak? Three summer days, I lingered reflecting, and even composing (*dichtete*) by the Pine-chasms of Vacluse;¹ and in that clear Lakelet moistened my bread. I have sat under the Palm-

trees of Tadmor;² smoked a pipe among the ruins of Babylon. The great Wall of China I have seen; and can testify that it is of gray brick, coped and covered with granite, and shows only second-rate masonry. — Great Events, also, have not I witnessed? Kings sweated-down (*ausgemergelt*) into Berlin-and-Milan³ Customhouse-Officers; the World well won, and the World well lost; oftener than once a hundred-thousand individuals shot (by each other) in one day. All kindreds and peoples and nations dashed together, and shifted and shovelled into heaps, that they might ferment there, and in time unite. The birth-pangs of Democracy, wherewith convulsed Europe was groaning in cries that reached Heaven, could not escape me.

"For great Men I have ever had the warmest predilection; and can perhaps boast that few such in this era have wholly escaped me. Great Men are the inspired (speaking and acting) Texts of that divine BOOK OF REVELATION, whereof a Chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named HISTORY; to which inspired Texts your numerous talented men, and your innumerable untalented men, are the better or worse exegetic Commentaries, and wagonload of too-stupid, heretical or orthodox, weekly Sermons. For my study, the inspired Texts themselves! Thus did not I, in very early days, having disguised me as tavern-waiter, stand behind the field-chairs, under the shady Tree at Treisnitz by the Jena Highway; waiting upon the great Schiller and greater Goethe; and hearing what I have not forgotten. For —"

— But at this point the Editor recalls his principle of caution, some time ago laid down, and must suppress much. Let not the sacredness of Laurelled, still more, of Crowned Heads, be tampered with. Should we, at a future day, find circumstances altered, and the time come for Publication, then may these glimpses into the privacy of the Illustrious be conceded; which for the present were little better than treacherous, perhaps traitorous Eavesdroppings. Of Lord Byron, therefore, of Pope Pius, Emperor Tarkwang,³ and the "White Water-roses" (Chinese Carbonari) with their mysteries, no notice here! Of Napoleon himself we shall only, glancing from afar, remark that Teufelsdröckh's relation to him seems to have

¹ Palmyra, once a city on an oasis in the desert east of Syria.

² The Berlin and Milan decrees were directed by Napoleon from those cities, imposing restrictions on British trade.

³ The contemporary Emperor of China.

¹ A village near Avignon where Petrarch once lived.

been of very varied character. At first we find our poor Professor on the point of being shot as a spy; then taken into private conversation, even pinched on the ear, yet presented with no money; at last indignantly dismissed, almost thrown out of doors, as an "Ideologist." "He himself," says the Professor, "was among the completest Ideologists, at least Ideopraxists: in the Idea (*in der Idee*) he lived, moved and fought. The man was a Divine Missionary, though unconscious of it; and preached, through the cannon's throat, that great doctrine, *La carrière ouverte aux talents* (The Tools to him that can handle them), which is our ultimate Political Evangel, wherein alone can liberty lie. Madly enough he preached, it is true, as Enthusiasts and first Missionaries are wont, with imperfect utterance, amid much frothy rant; yet as articulately perhaps as the case admitted. Or call him, if you will, an American Backwoodsman, who had to fell unpenetrated forests, and battle with innumerable wolves, and did not entirely forbear strong liquor, rioting, and even theft; whom, notwithstanding, the peaceful Sower will follow, and, as he cuts the boundless harvest, bless."

More legitimate and decisively authentic is Teufelsdröckh's appearance and emergence (we know not well whence) in the solitude of the North Cape, on that June Midnight. He has a "light-blue Spanish cloak" hanging round him, as his "most commodious, principal, indeed sole upper-garment"; and stands there, on the World-promontory, looking over the infinite Brine, like a little blue Belfry (as we figure), now motionless indeed, yet ready, if stirred, to ring quaintest changes.

"Silence as of death," writes he; "for Midnight, even in the Arctic latitudes, has its character: nothing but the granite cliffs ruddy-tinged, the peaceable gurgle of that slow-heaving Polar Ocean, over which in the utmost North the great Sun hangs low and lazy, as if he too were slumbering. Yet is his cloud-couch wrought of crimson and cloth-of-gold; yet does his light stream over the mirror of waters, like a tremulous fire-pillar, shooting downwards to the abyss, and hide itself under my feet. In such moments, Solitude also is invaluable; for who would speak, or be looked on, when behind him lies all Europe and Africa, fast asleep, except the watchmen; and before him the silent Immensity, and Palace of the Eternal, whereof our Sun is but a porch-lamp?"

"Nevertheless, in this solemn moment

comes a man, or monster, scrambling from among the rock-hollows; and, shaggy, huge as the Hyperborean Bear, hails me in Russian speech: most probably, therefore, a Russian Smuggler. With courteous brevity, I signify my indifference to contraband trade, my humane intentions, yet strong wish to be private. In vain: the monster, counting doubtless on his superior stature, and minded to make sport for himself, or perhaps profit, were it with murder, continues to advance: ever assailing me with his importunate train-oil breath; and now has advanced, till we stand both on the verge of the rock, the deep Sea rippling greedily down below. What argument will avail? On the thick Hyperborean, cherubic reasoning, seraphic eloquence were lost. Prepared for such extremity, I, deftly enough, whisk aside one step; draw out, from my interior reservoirs, a sufficient Birmingham Horse-pistol, and say, 'Be so obliging as retire, Friend (*Er ziehe sich zurück, Freund*), and with promptitude!' This logic even the Hyperborean understands: fast enough, with apologetic, petitionary growl, he sidles off; and, except for suicidal as well as homicidal purposes, need not return.

"Such I hold to be the genuine use of Gunpowder: that it makes all men alike tall. Nay, if thou be cooler, cleverer than I, if thou have more *Mind*, though all but no *Body* whatever, then canst thou kill me first, and art the taller. Hereby, at last, is the Goliath powerless, and the David resistless; savage Animalism is nothing, inventive Spiritualism is all.

"With respect to Duels, indeed, I have my own ideas. Few things, in this so surprising world, strike me with more surprise. Two little visual Spectra of men, hovering with insecure enough cohesion in the midst of the UNFATHOMABLE, and to dissolve therein, at any rate, very soon, — make pause at the distance of twelve paces asunder; whirl round; and, simultaneously by the cunningest mechanism, explode one another into Dissolution; and off-hand become Air, and Non-extant! Deuce on it (*verdammt*), the little spitfires! — Nay, I think with old Hugo von Trimberg: 'God must needs laugh outright, could such a thing be, to see his wondrous Manikins here below.'"

But amid these specialties, let us not forget the great generality, which is our chief quest here: How prospered the inner man of Teufelsdröckh under so much outward shifting? Does Legion still lurk in him, though

repressed; or has he exorcised that Devil's Brood? We can answer that the symptoms continue promising. Experience is the grand spiritual Doctor; and with him Teufelsdröckh had been long a patient, swallowing many a bitter bolus. Unless our poor Friend belong to the numerous class of Incurables, which seems not likely, some cure will doubtless be affected. We should rather say that Legion, or the Satanic School,¹ was now pretty well extirpated and cast out, but next to nothing introduced in its room; whereby the heart remains, for the while, in a quiet but no comfortable state.

"At length, after so much roasting," thus writes our Autobiographer, "I was what you might name calcined. Pray only that it be not rather, as is the more frequent issue, reduced to a *caput-mortuum*!"² But in any case, by mere dint of practice, I had grown familiar with many things. Wretchedness was still wretched; but I could now partly see through it, and despise it. Which highest mortal, in this inane Existence, had I not found a Shadow-hunter, or Shadow-hunted; and, when I looked through his brave garnitures, miserable enough? Thy wishes have all been sniffed aside, thought I: but what, had they even been all granted! Did not the Boy Alexander weep because he had not two Planets to conquer; or a whole Solar System; or after that, whole Universe? *Ach Gott*, when I gazed into these Stars, have they not looked-down on me as if with pity, from their serene spaces; like Eyes glistening with heavenly tears over the little lot of man! Thousands of human generations, all as noisy as our own, have been swallowed-up of Time, and there remains no wreck of them any more; and Arcturus and Orion and Sirius and the Pleiades are still shining in their courses, clear and young, as when the Shepherd first noted them in the plain of Shinar. Pshaw! what is this paltry little Dogcage of an Earth; what art thou that sittest whining there? Thou art still Nothing, Nobody: true; but who, then, is Something, Somebody? For thee the Family of Man has no use; it rejects thee; thou art wholly as a dis-severed limb: so be it; perhaps it is better so!"

Too-heavy-laden Teufelsdröckh! Yet surely his hands are loosening; one day he will hurl the burden far from him, and bound forth free and with a second youth.

¹ So Southey called the school of Byron.

² Literally, a dead-head — from the terminology of the old chemists, denoting the residuum when volatile elements had escaped.

"This," says our Professor, "was the CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE I had now reached; through which whoso travels from the Negative Pole to the Positive must necessarily pass."

CHAPTER IX

THE EVERLASTING YEA

"Temptations in the Wilderness!" exclaims Teufelsdröckh: "Have we not all to be tried with such? Not so easily can the old Adam, lodged in us by birth, be dispossessed. Our Life is compassed round with Necessity; yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force: thus have we a warfare; in the beginning, especially, a hard-fought battle. For the God-given mandate, *Work thou in Well-doing*, lies mysteriously written, in Promethean Prophetic Characters, in our hearts; and leaves us no rest, night or day, till it be deciphered and obeyed; till it burn forth, in our conduct, a visible, acted Gospel of Freedom. And as the clay-given mandate, *Eat thou and be filled*, at the same time persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve, — must not there be a confusion, a contest, before the better Influence can become the upper?"

"To me nothing seems more natural than that the Son of Man, when such God-given mandate first prophetically stirs within him, and the Clay must now be vanquished or vanquish, — should be carried of the spirit into grim Solitudes, and there fronting the Tempter do grimmest battle with him; defiantly setting him at naught, till he yield and fly. Name it as we choose: with or without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral Desert of selfishness and baseness, — to such Temptation are we all called. Unhappy if we are not! Unhappy if we are but Half-men, in whom that divine hand-writing has never blazed forth, all-subduing, in true sun-splendor; but quivers dubiously amid meaner lights: or smoulders, in dull pain, in darkness, under earthly vapors! — Our Wilderness is the wide World in an Atheistic Century; our Forty Days are long years of suffering and fasting: nevertheless, to these also comes an end. Yes, to me also was given, if not Victory, yet the consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty is left. To me also, entangled in the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and of sound, it was given, after weariest wanderings, to work out

my way into the higher sunlight slopes — of that Mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only!"

He says elsewhere, under a less ambitious figure; as figures are, once for all, natural to him: "Has not thy Life been that of most sufficient men (*tüchtigen Männer*) thou hast known in this generation? An outflush of foolish young Enthusiasm, like the first fallow-crop, wherein are as many weeds as valuable herbs: this all parched away, under the Droughts of practical and spiritual Unbelief, as Disappointment, in thought and act, often-repeated gave rise to Doubt, and Doubt gradually settled into Denial! If I have had a second-crop, and now see the perennial greensward, and sit under umbrageous cedars, which defy all Drought (and Doubt); herein too, be the Heavens praised, I am not without examples, and even examplars."

So that, for Teufelsdröckh also, there has been a "glorious revolution": these mad shadow-hunting and shadow-hunted Pilgrimings of his were but some purifying "Temptation in the Wilderness," before his apostolic work (such as it was) could begin; which Temptation is now happily over, and the Devil once more worsted! Was "that high moment in the *Rue de l'Enfer*," then, properly the turning-point of the battle; when the Fiend said, *Worship me, or be torn in shreds*; and was answered valiantly with an *Apage Satana?*¹ — Singular Teufelsdröckh, would thou hadst told thy singular story in plain words! But it is fruitless to look there, in those Paper-bags, for such. Nothing but innuendoes, figurative crotchets: a typical Shadow, fitfully wavering, propheticos-satiric; no clear logical Picture. "How paint to the sensual eye," asks he once, "what passes in the Holy-of-Holies of Man's Soul; in what words, known to these profane times, speak even afar-off of the unspeakable?" We ask in turn: Why perplex these times, profane as they are, with needless obscurity, by omission and by commission? Not mystical only is our Professor, but whimsical; and involves himself, now more than ever, in eye-bewildering *chiaroscuro*. Successive glimpses, here faithfully imparted, our more gifted readers must endeavor to combine for their own behoof.

He says: "The hot Harmattan² wind had raged itself out; its howl went silent within

me; and the long-deafened soul could now hear. I paused in my wild wanderings; and sat me down to wait, and consider; for it was as if the hour of change drew nigh. I seemed to surrender, to renounce utterly, and say: Fly, then, false shadows of Hope; I will chase you no more, I will believe you no more. And ye too, haggard spectres of Fear, I care not for you; ye too are all shadows and a lie. Let me rest here: for I am way-weary and life-weary; I will rest here, were it but to die; to die or to live is alike to me; alike insignificant." — And again: "Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE; cast, doubtless by benignant upper Influence, into a healing sleep, the heavy dreams rolled gradually away, and I awoke to a new Heaven and a new Earth. The first preliminary moral Act, Annihilation of Self (*Selbstlöschung*), had been happily accomplished; and my mind's eyes were now unsealed, and its hands ungyved."

Might we not also conjecture that the following passage refers to his Locality, during this same "healing sleep"; that his Pilgrim-staff lies cast aside here, on "the high table-land"; and indeed that the repose is already taking wholesome effect on him? If it were not that the tone, in some parts, has more of riancy, even of levity, than we could have expected! However, in Teufelsdröckh, there is always the strangest Dualism: light dancing, with guitar-music, will be going on in the fore-court, while by fits from within comes the faint whimpering of woe and wail. We transcribe the piece entire.

"Beautiful it was to sit there, as in my skyey Tent, musing and meditating; on the high table-land, in front of the Mountains; over me, as roof, the azure Dome, and around me, for walls, four azure-flowing curtains, — namely, of the Four azure Winds, on whose bottom-fringes also I have seen gilding. And then to fancy the fair Castles that stood sheltered in these Mountain hollows; with their green flower-lawns, and white dames and damosels, lovely enough: or better still, the straw-roofed Cottages, wherein stood many a Mother baking bread, with her children round her: — all hidden and protectingly folded-up in the valley-folds; yet there and alive, as sure as if I beheld them. Or to see, as well as fancy, the nine Towns and Villages, that lay round my mountain-seat, which, in still weather, were wont to speak to me (by their steeple-bells) with metal tongue; and, in almost all weather, proclaimed their vitality by re-

¹ "Get thee behind me, Satan!" Matthew IV, 10.

² A devastating dry land wind felt on the coast of Africa.

peated Smoke-clouds; whereon, as on a culinary horologe, I might read the hour of the day. For it was the smoke of cookery, as kind housewives at morning, midday, eventide, were boiling their husbands' kettles; and ever a blue pillar rose up into the air, successively or simultaneously, from each of the nine, saying, as plainly as smoke could say: Such and such a meal is getting ready here. Not uninteresting! For you have the whole Borough, with all its love-makings and scandal-mongeries, contentions and contentments, as in miniature, and could cover it all with your hat. — If, in my wide Wayfarings, I had learned to look into the business of the World in its details, here perhaps was the place for combining it into general propositions, and deducing inferences therefrom.

"Often also could I see the black Tempest marching in anger through the Distance: round some Schreckhorn,¹ as yet grim-blue, would the eddying vapor gather, and there tumultuously eddy, and flow down like a mad witch's hair; till, after a space, it vanished, and, in the clear sunbeam, your Schreckhorn stood smiling grim-white, for the vapor had held snow. How thou fermentest and elaboratest, in thy great fermenting-vat and laboratory of an Atmosphere, of a World, O Nature! — Or what is Nature? Ha! why do I not name thee God? Art not thou the 'Living Garment of God'? O Heavens, is it, in very deed, HE, then, that ever speaks through thee; that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me?"

"Fore-shadows, call them rather fore-splendors, of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the Ship-wrecked in Nova Zembla;² ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, and my Father's!"

"With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow man: with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor, wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou not so weary, so heavy-laden;

and thy Bed of Rest is but a Grave. O my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes! — Truly, the din of many-voiced Life, which, in this solitude, with the mind's organ, I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one; like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. The poor Earth, with her poor joys, was now my needy Mother, not my cruel Stepdame; Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavors, had become the dearer to me; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him Brother. Thus was I standing in the porch of that 'Sanctuary of Sorrow';³ by strange, steep ways had I too been guided thither; and ere long its sacred gates would open, and the 'Divine Depth of Sorrow' lie disclosed to me."

The Professor says, he here first got eye on the Knot that had been strangling him, and straightway could unfasten it, and was free. "A vain interminable controversy," writes he, "touching what is at present called Origin of Evil, or some such thing, arises in every soul, since the beginning of the world; and in every soul, that would pass from idle Suffering into actual Endeavoring, must first be put an end to. The most, in our time, have to go content with a simple, incomplete enough Suppression of this controversy; to a few some Solution of it is indispensable. In every new era, too, such Solution comes-out in different terms; and ever the Solution of the last era has become obsolete, and is found unserviceable. For it is man's nature to change his Dialect from century to century; he cannot help it though he would. The authentic *Church-Catechism* of our present century has not yet fallen into my hands: meanwhile, for my own private behoof, I attempt to elucidate the matter so. Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one Shoeblock HAPPY? They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two: for the Shoeblock also has a Soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: *God's infinite Universe altogether to himself,*

¹ Peak of Terror. In the Bernese Alps.

² A reference to the Barents Expedition seeking a northern passage whose ship was frozen in off the coast of Nova Zembla in the late sixteenth century.

³ From Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Travels*, chap. XI.

therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose. Oceans of Hochheimer, a Throat like that of Ophiuchus: speak not of them; to the infinite Shoebblack they are as nothing. No sooner is your ocean filled, than he grumbles that it might have been of better vintage. Try him with half of a Universe, of an Omnipotence, he sets to quarrelling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men. — Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even, as I said, the *Shadow of Ourselves*.

"But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, or our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of indefeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts; requires neither thanks nor complaint; only such *overplus* as there may be do we account Happiness; any *deficit* again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of Self-conceit there is in each of us, — do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See there, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used! — I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou *fanciest* those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel thy happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.

"So true is it, what I then said, that the *Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator*. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, *Unity* itself divided by Zero will give *Infinity*. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time¹ write: 'It is only with Renunciation (*Entsagen*) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.'

"I asked myself: What is this that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting, on account of? Say it in a word: is it not because thou art not HAPPY? Because the THOU (sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honored, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there that thou shouldst be Happy? A little while ago thou

hadst no right to *be* at all. What if thou wert born and predestined not to be Happy, but to be Unhappy! Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to *eat*; and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy *Byron*; open thy *Goethe*."

"*Es leuchtet mir ein*, I see a glimpse of it!" cries he elsewhere: "there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness; he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honored to be taught; O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become contrite, and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him."

And again: "Small is it that thou canst trample the Earth with its injuries under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno² trained thee: thou canst love the Earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee; for this a Greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent. Knowest thou that '*Worship of Sorrow*'? The Temple thereof, founded some eighteen centuries ago, now lies in ruins, overgrown with jungle, the habitation of doleful creatures: nevertheless, venture forward; in a low crypt, arched out of falling fragments, thou findest the Altar still there, and its sacred Lamp perennially burning."

Without pretending to comment on which strange utterances, the Editor will only remark, that there lies beside them much of a still more questionable character; unsuited to the general apprehension; nay wherein he himself does not see his way. Nebulous disquisitions on Religion, yet not without bursts of splendor; on the "perennial continuance of Inspiration"; on Prophecy; that there are

¹ Goethe.

² Founder of the Stoic philosophy.

"true Priests, as well as Baal-Priests, in our own day": with more of the like sort. We select some fractions, by way of finish to this farrago.

"Cease, my much respected Herr von Voltaire," thus apostrophizes the Professor: "shut thy sweet voice; for the task appointed thee seems finished. Sufficiently hast thou demonstrated this proposition, considerable or otherwise: That the Mythus of the Christian Religion looks not in the eighteenth century as it did in the eighth. Alas, were thy six-and-thirty quartos, and the six-and-thirty thousand other quartos and folios, and flying sheets or reams, printed before and since on the same subject, all needed to convince us of so little! But what next? Wilt thou help us to embody the divine Spirit of that Religion in a new Mythus, in a new vehicle and vesture, that our Souls, otherwise too like perishing, may live? What! thou hast no faculty in that kind? Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building? Take our thanks, then, and —— thyself away.

"Meanwhile what are antiquated Mythuses to me? Or is the God present, felt in my own heart, a thing which Herr von Voltaire will dispute out of me; or dispute into me? To the '*Worship of Sorrow*' ascribe what origin and genesis thou pleasest, *has not* that Worship originated, and been generated; is it not *here*? Feel it in thy heart, and then say whether it is of God! This is Belief; all else is Opinion; — for which latter whoso will, let him worry and be worried."

"Neither," observes he elsewhere, "shall ye tear-out one another's eyes, struggling over '*Plenary Inspiration*,' and such-like: try rather to get a little even Partial Inspiration, each of you for himself. One BIBLE I know, of whose Plenary Inspiration doubt is not so much as possible; nay with my own eyes I saw the God's-Hand writing it: thereof all other Bibles are but Leaves, — say, in Picture-Writing to assist the weaker faculty."

Or, to give the wearied reader relief, and bring it to an end, let him take the following perhaps more intelligible passage:

"To me, in this our life," says the Professor, "which is an internecine warfare with the Time-spirit, other warfare seems questionable. Hast thou in any way a Contention with thy brother, I advise thee, think well what the meaning thereof is. If thou gauge it to the bottom, it is simply this: 'Fellow, see! thou art taking more than thy

share of Happiness in the world, something from *my* share: which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not; nay I will fight thee rather.' — Alas, and the whole lot to be divided is such a beggarly matter, truly a 'feast of shells,' for the substance has been spilled out: not enough to quench one Appetite; and the collective human species clutching at *them*! — Can we not, in all such cases, rather say: 'Take it, thou too-ravenous individual; take that pitiful additional fraction of a share, which I reckoned mine, but which thou so wantest; take it with a blessing: would to Heaven I had enough for thee!' — If Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*¹ be, 'to a certain extent, Applied Christianity,' surely to a still greater extent, so is this. We have here not a Whole Duty of Man;² yet a Half Duty, namely the Passive half: could we but do it, as we can demonstrate it!

"But indeed Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay properly Conviction is not possible till then; inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless, a vortex amid vortices: only by a felt indubitable certainty of Experience does it find any centre to revolve round, and so fashion itself into a system. Most true is it, as a wise man teaches us, that 'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action.' On which ground, too, let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay this other precept well to heart, which to me was of invaluable service: '*Do the Duty which lies nearest thee*,' which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer.

"May we not say, however, that the hour of Spiritual Enfranchisement is even this: When your Ideal World, wherein the whole man has been dimly struggling and inexpressibly languishing to work, becomes revealed, and thrown open; and you discover, with amazement enough, like the Lothario in *Wilhelm Meister*, that your '*America is here or nowhere*'? The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy

¹ The Theory of Knowledge by Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814).

² An anonymous book of moral instruction first published in 1659.

Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, 'here or nowhere,' couldst thou only see!

"But it is with man's Soul as it was with Nature: the beginning of Creation is — Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when over the tempest-tossed Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light! Ever to the greatest that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing; even as, under simpler figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval Discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate Firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above: instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, heaven-compassed World.

"I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even World-kin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

BOOK III

CHAPTER VIII

NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM

It is in his stupendous Section, headed *Natural Supernaturalism*, that the Professor first becomes a Seer; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "Cloth-webs and Cob-webs," of Imperial Mantles, Superannuated Symbols, and what not: yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worst of all, two quite mysterious, world-embracing Phantasms, TIME and SPACE, have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering: but

with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Here, therefore, properly it is that the Philosophy of Clothes attains to Transcendentalism; this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where *Palingenesis*,¹ in all senses, may be considered as beginning. "Courage, then!" may our Diogenes exclaim, with better right than Diogenes the First once did. This stupendous Section we, after long painful meditation, have found not to be unintelligible; but, on the contrary, to grow clear, nay radiant, and all-illuminating. Let the reader, turning on it what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him, do his part; as we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours:

"Deep has been, and is, the significance of Miracles," thus quietly begins the Professor; "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a Miracle? To that Dutch King of Siam, an icicle had been a miracle; whoso had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my Horse, again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical 'Open sesame!' every time I please to pay twopence, and open for him an impassable *Schlagbaum*, or shut Turnpike?"

"But is not a real Miracle simply a violation of the Laws of Nature?" ask several. Whom I answer by this new question: What are the Laws of Nature? To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these Laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper Law, now first penetrated into, and by Spiritual Force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its Material Force.

"Here too may some inquire, not without astonishment: On what ground shall one, that can make Iron swim, come and declare that therefore he can teach Religion? To us, truly, of the Nineteenth Century, such declaration were inept enough; which nevertheless to our fathers, of the First Century, was full of meaning.

"But is it not the deepest Law of Nature that she be constant?" cries an illuminated

¹ second birth.

class: 'Is not the Machine of the Universe fixed to move by unalterable rules?' Probable enough, good friends: nay I, too, must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be 'without variableness or shadow of turning,' does indeed never change; that Nature, that the Universe, which no one whom it so pleases can be prevented from calling a Machine, does move by the most unalterable rules. And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete Statute-Book of Nature, may possibly be?

"They stand written in our Works of Science, say you; in the accumulated records of Man's Experience? — Was Man with his Experience present at the Creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the Universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel; that they read His ground-plan of the incomprehensible All; and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in anywise! These scientific individuals have been nowhere but where we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore.

"Laplace's Book on the Stars, wherein he exhibits that certain Planets, with their Satellites, gyrate round our worthy Sun, at a rate and in a course, which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting, — is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest 'Mechanism of the Heavens,' and 'System of the World'; this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel's Fifteen-thousand Suns per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons, and inert Balls, had been — looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane?

"System of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite infinite depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles. The course of Nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us: but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle revolves on? To the Minnow every

cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (unmiraculously enough), be quite upset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Æons of Æons.

"We speak of the Volume of Nature: and truly a Volume it is, — whose Author and Writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of Science, they strive bravely; and, from amid the thick-crowded, inextricably intertangled hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dextrous combination, some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice. That Nature is more than some boundless Volume of such Recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible Domestic-Cookery Book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve itself, the fewest dream.

"Custom," continues the Professor, "doth make dotards of us all. Consider well, thou wilt find that Custom is the greatest of Weavers; and weaves air-raidment for all the Spirits of the Universe; whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops; but their spiritual nature becomes, to the most, forever hidden. Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftentimes simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to transcend the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?

"Innumerable are the illusions and legerdemain-tricks of Custom: but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the Miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be Miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder: and herein is Custom so far a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond foolish nurse, or rather we are false foolish nurse-¹⁰lings, when, in our resting and reflecting hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the Stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two-hundred, or two-million times? There is no reason in Nature or in Art why I should; unless, indeed, I am a mere Work-Machine, for whom the divine gift of Thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of Steam is to the Steam-engine; a power whereby cotton²⁰ might be spun, and money and money's worth realized.

"Notable enough too, here as elsewhere, wilt thou find the potency of Names; which indeed are but one kind of such custom-woven, wonder-hiding Garments. Witchcraft, and all manner of Spectre-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness and Diseases of the Nerves. Seldom reflecting that still the new question comes upon³⁰ us: What is Madness, what are Nerves? Ever, as before, does Madness remain a mysterious-terrific, altogether *infernal* boiling-up of the Nether Chaotic Deep, through this fair-painted Vision of Creation,³⁵ which swims thereon, which we name the Real. Was Luther's Picture of the Devil less a Reality, whether it were formed within the bodily eye, or without it? In every the wisest Soul lies a whole world of internal⁴⁰ Madness, an authentic Demon-Empire; out of which, indeed, his world of Wisdom has been creatively built together, and now rests there, as on its dark foundations does a habitable flowery Earth-rind.

"But deepest of all illusory Appearances, for hiding Wonder, as for many other ends, are your two grand fundamental world-enveloping Appearances, SPACE and TIME.⁵⁰ These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here, and yet to blind it, — lie all-embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on Earth, shall you endeavor to strip them off; you can,

at best, but rend them asunder for moments, and look through.

"Fortunatus had a wishing Hat, which when he put on, and wished himself Any-⁵where, behold he was There. By this means had Fortunatus triumphed over Space, he had annihilated Space; for him there was no Where, but all was Here. Were a Hatter to establish himself, in the Wahngasse of Weiss-nichtwo, and make felts of this sort for all mankind, what a world we should have of it! Still stranger, should, on the opposite side of the street, another Hatter establish himself; and, as his fellow-craftsman made Space-¹⁵annihilating Hats, make Time-annihilating! Of both would I purchase, were it with my last groschen; but chiefly of this latter. To clap-on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were *Anywhere*, straightway to be *There!* Next to clap-on your other felt, and, simply by wishing that you were *Anywhen*, straightway to be *Then!* This were indeed the grander: shooting at will from the Fire-Creation of the World to its²⁵ Fire-Consummation; here historically present in the First Century, conversing face to face with Paul and Seneca; there prophetically in the Thirty-first, conversing also face to face with other Pauls and Senecas, who as yet stand hidden in the depth of that late Time!

"Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the Past annihilated, then, or only past; is the Future nonextant, or only future? Those mystic faculties of thine, Memory and Hope, already answer: already through those mystic avenues, thou the Earth-blinded summonest both Past and Future, and communest with them, though⁴⁰ as yet darkly, and with mute beckonings. The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of Tomorrow roll up; but Yesterday and Tomorrow both *are*. Pierce through the Time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanc-⁴⁵tuaries of Man's Soul, even as all Thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there: that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God; that with God as it is a universal⁵⁰ HERE, so is it an everlasting NOW.

"And seest thou therein any glimpse of IMMORTALITY? — O Heaven! Is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone, — but a pale spectral

Illusion! Is the lost Friend still mysteriously Here, even as we are Here mysteriously, with God! — Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, is even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries: believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

"That the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings, seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue rank of Realities: and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and therewith clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practices on us.

"Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand antimagician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy, and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

"Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion, built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summoning out all the sandstone rocks, to dance along from the *Steinbruch*¹ (now a

¹ quarry.

huge Troglodyte Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilizing Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen-hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

"Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover: The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck, and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

"Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? The English Johnson longed, all his life, to see one; but could not, though he went to Cock Lane, and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins. Foolish Doctor! Did he never, with the mind's eye as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human Life he so loved; did he never so much as look into Himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well-nigh a million of Ghosts were travelling the streets by his side. Once more I say, sweep away the illusion of Time; compress the threescore years into three minutes: what else was he, what else

are we? Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and Invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a simple scientific *fact*; we start out of Nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us, as round the veriest spectre, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and æons. Come there not tones of Love and Faith, as from celestial harp-strings, like the Song of beatified Souls? And again, do not we squeak and jibber (in our discordant, screech-owlish debates and recriminations); and glide bodeful, and feeble, and fearful; or uproar (*poltern*), and revel in our mad Dance of the Dead, — till the scent of the morning air summons us to our still Home; and dreamy Night becomes awake and Day? Where now is Alexander of Macedon: does the steel Host, that yelled in fierce battle-shouts at Issus and Arbela, remain behind him; or have they all vanished utterly, even as perturbed Goblins must? Napoleon too, and his Moscow Retreats and Austerlitz Campaigns! Was it all other than the veriest Spectre-hunt; which has now, with its howling tumult that made Night hideous, flitted away? — Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

"O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry each a future Ghost within Him; but are, in very deed, Ghosts! These Limbs, whence had we them; this stormy Force; this life-blood with its burning Passion? They are dust and shadow; a Shadow-system gathered round our ME; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the Flesh. That warrior on his strong war-horse, fire flashes through his eyes; force dwells in his arm and heart: but warrior and war-horse are a vision; a revealed Force, nothing more. Stately they tread the Earth, as if it were a firm substance: fool! the Earth is but a film; it cracks in twain, and warrior and war-horse sink beyond plummet's sounding. Plummet's? Fantasy herself will not follow them. A little while ago, they were not; a little while, and they are not, their very ashes are not.

"So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends: one grinding in

the mill of Industry; one hunter-like climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow: — and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are levelled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped-in; the last Rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence? — O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

'We are such stuff

*As dreams are made of, and our little Life
Is rounded with a sleep!'*"

PAST AND PRESENT

1843

The publication by the Camden Society of a mediæval chronicle, giving an account of the reformation of the Monastery of Saint Edmundsbury in the reign of King John, furnished Carlyle with the text for a sermon on the necessity of a similar reform in the England of his day. In 1843 the condition of the country was alarming. The extension of manufacturing had called into existence a great population of industrial workers, men, women, and children, whose lives depended precariously on the demand for English-made goods. There was a high tariff on imported grain to protect the agricultural interests, and as England had long ceased to raise enough food for her population, starvation of the poor was chronic. Carlyle saw the three classes which divided England at odds with each other. The old landed aristocracy had ceased to govern, and were sunk in idleness and pleasure. The active middle class to which the political power had passed were ambitious of material success and selfishly devoted to their own interests, content to attribute the misery of the workers to economic law. The lower class were demanding a share in the government through the People's Charter, and threatening revolution. Carlyle believed that the well-being of the community, as of the single life, depended on the practice of the

virtues of toil and sacrifice; and he felt the necessity of putting at the head of the State a strong governor, like the Abbot Samson who brought the idle and dissipated monks of Saint Edmundsbury to order. This notion of the part played by the strong man, the hero, in history, and the need of hero-worship, in the present, is the essence of Carlyle's social doctrine.

BOOK III CHAPTER XII

REWARD

"Religion," I said; for, properly speaking, all true Work is Religion: and whatsoever Religion is not Work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbor. Admirable was that of the old Monks, "*Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship."

Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, forever-enduring Gospel: Work, and therein have well-being. Man, Son of Earth and of Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force for Work;—and burns like a painfully-smoldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable; obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy; attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity and Thee! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out, that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it; that, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man be covered.

But above all, where thou findest Ignorance, Stupidity, Brute-mindedness,—yes, there, with or without Church-tithes and Shovel-hat, with or without Talfourd-Mahon's Copyrights, or were it with mere dungeons and gibbets and crosses, attack it, I say; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite, in the name of God! The Highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so

command thee; still audibly, if thou have ears to hear. He, even He, with his *unspoken* voice, awfulest than any Sinai thunders or syllabled speech of Whirlwinds; for the
5 SILENCE of deep Eternities, of Worlds from beyond the morning-stars, does it not speak to thee? The unborn Ages; the old Graves, with their long-moldering dust, the very tears that wetted it now all dry,—do not
10 these speak to thee, what ear hath not heard? The deep Death-kingdoms, the Stars in their never-resting courses, all Space and all Time, proclaim it to thee in continual silent admonition. Thou too, if ever man should,
15 shalt work while it is called Today. For the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

All true Work is sacred; in all true Work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the
20 Earth, has its summit in Heaven. Sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all Sciences, all spoken Epics, all acted Hero-
25 isms, Martyrdoms,—up to that "Agony of bloody sweat," which all men have called divine! O brother, if this is not "worship," then I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under
30 God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow Workmen there, in God's Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving: sacred Band of the Im-
35 mortals, celestial Bodyguard of the Empire of Mankind. Even in the weak Human Memory they survive so long, as saints, as heroes, as gods; they alone surviving; peopling, they alone, the unmeasured solitudes of Time!
40 To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; Heaven is kind,—as a noble Mother; as that Spartan Mother, saying while she gave her son his shield, "With it, my son, or upon it!" Thou too shalt return *home* in
45 honor; to thy far-distant Home, in honor; doubt it not,—if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and deepest Death-kingdoms, art not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen! Complain not;
50 the very Spartans did not *complain*.

And who art thou that braggest of thy life of Idleness; complacently showest thy bright gilt equipages; sumptuous cushions; appliances for folding of the hands to mere
55 sleep? Looking up, looking down, around, behind or before, discernest thou, if it be not in Mayfair alone, any *idle* hero, saint, god, or even devil? Not a vestige of one.

1 Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795-1854), English jurist and poet, best known in Parliament as author of the International Copyright Law.

In the Heavens, in the Earth, in the Waters under the Earth, is none like unto thee. Thou art an original figure in this Creation; a denizen in Mayfair alone, in this extraordinary Century or Half-Century alone! One monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his "Religion"? That Nature is a Phantasm, where cunning beggary or thievery may sometimes find good victual. That God is a lie; and that Man and his Life are a lie. — Alas, alas, who of us is there that can say, I have worked? The faithfulest of us are unprofitable servants; the faithfulest of us know that best. The faithfulest of us may say, with sad and true old Samuel,¹ "Much of my life has been trifled away!" But he that has, and except "on public occasions" professes to have, no function but that of going idle in a graceful or graceless manner; and of begetting sons to go idle; and to address Chief Spinners and Diggers, who at least *are* spinning and digging, "Ye scandalous persons who produce too much" — My Corn-Law friends, on what imaginary still richer Eldorados, and true iron-spikes with law of gravitation, are ye rushing!

As to the Wages of Work there might innumerable things be said; there will and must yet innumerable things be said and spoken, in Saint Stephen's² and out of Saint Stephen's; and gradually not a few things be ascertained and written, on Law-parchment, concerning this very matter: — "Fair day's-wages for a fair day's-work" is the most unrefusable demand! Money-wages "to the extend of keeping your worker alive that he may work more;" these, unless you mean to dismiss him straightway out of this world, are indispensable alike to the noblest Worker and to the least noble!

One thing only I will say here, in special reference to the former class, the noble and noblest; but throwing light on all the other classes and their arrangements of this difficult matter: The "wages" of every noble Work do yet lie in Heaven or else Nowhere. Not in Bank-of-England bills, in Owen's³ Labor-bank, or any the most improved establishment of banking and money-changing, needest thou, heroic soul, present thy account of earnings. Human banks and labor-banks know thee not; or know thee after generations and centuries have passed away, and thou art clean gone from "rewarding," — all

manner of bank-drafts, shop-tills, and Downing-street Exchequers lying very invisible, so far from thee! Nay, at bottom, dost thou need any reward? Was it thy aim and life-purpose to be filled with good things for thy heroism; to have a life of pomp and ease, and be what men call "happy," in this world, or in any other world? I answer for thee deliberately, No. The whole spiritual secret of the new epoch lies in this, that thou canst answer for thyself, with thy whole clearness of head and heart, deliberately, No!

My brother, the brave man has to give his Life away. Give it, I advise thee; — thou dost not expect to *sell* thy Life in an adequate manner? What price, for example, would content thee? The just price of thy LIFE to thee, — why, God's entire Creation to thyself, the whole Universe of Space, the whole Eternity of Time, and what they hold: that is the price which would content thee; that, and if thou wilt be candid, nothing short of that! It is thy all; and for it thou wouldst have all. Thou art an unreasonable mortal; — or rather thou art a poor *infinite* mortal, who, in thy narrow clay-prison here, *seemest* so unreasonable! Thou wilt never sell thy Life, or any part of thy Life, in a satisfactory manner. Give it, like a royal heart; let the price be Nothing: thou *hast* then, in a certain sense, got All for it! The heroic man, — and is not every man, God be thanked, a potential hero? — has to do so, in all times and circumstances. In the most heroic age, as in the most unheroic, he will have to say, as Burns said proudly and humbly of his little Scottish Songs, little dewdrops of Celestial Melody in an age when so much was unmelodious: "By Heaven, they shall either be invaluable or of no value; I do not need your guineas for them!" It is an element which should, and must, enter deeply into all settlements of wages here below. They never will be "satisfactory" otherwise; they cannot, O Mammon Gospel, they never can! Money for my little piece of work "to the extent that will allow me to keep working;" yes, this, — unless you mean that I shall go my ways *before* the work is all taken out of me: but as to "wages" —!

On the whole, we do entirely agree with those old Monks, *Laborare est Orare*. In a thousand senses, from one end of it to the other, true Work is Worship. He that works, whatsoever be his work, he bodies forth the form of Things Unseen; a small Poet every Worker is. The idea, were it but of his poor Delf Platter, how much more of his Epic

¹ Samuel Johnson.

² The British Parliament.

³ Robert Owen (1771-1858), founder of English socialism.

Poem, is as yet "seen," half-seen, only by himself; to all others it is a thing unseen, impossible; to Nature herself it is a thing unseen, a thing which never hitherto was; — very "impossible," for it is as yet a No-thing! The Unseen Powers had need to watch over such a man; he works in and for the Unseen. Alas, if he look to the Seen Powers only, he may as well quit the business; his No-thing will never rightly issue as a Thing, but as a Deceptivity, a Sham-thing, — which it had better not do!

Thy No-thing of an Intended Poem, O Poet who hast looked merely to reviewers, copyrights, booksellers, popularities, behold it has not yet become a Thing; for the truth is not in it! Though printed, hotpressed, reviewed, celebrated, sold to the twentieth edition: what is all that? The Thing, in philosophical uncommercial language, is still a No-thing, mostly semblance and deception of the sight; — benign Oblivion incessantly gnawing at it, impatient till Chaos, to which it belongs, do reabsorb it! —

He who takes not counsel of the Unseen and Silent, from him will never come real visibility and speech. Thou must descend to the *Mothers*,¹ to the *Manes*,² and Hercules-like long suffer and labor there, wouldst thou emerge with victory into the sunlight. As in battle and the shock of war, — for is not this a battle? — thou too shalt fear no pain or death, shalt love no ease or life; the voice of festive Lubberlands, the noise of greedy Acheron shall alike lie silent under thy victorious feet. Thy work, like Dante's, shall "make thee lean for many years." The world and its wages, its criticisms, counsels, helps, impediments, shall be as a waste ocean-flood; the chaos through which thou art to swim and sail. Not the waste waves and their weedy gulf-streams, shalt thou take for guidance; thy star alone, — "*Se tu seguitua stella!*" Thy star alone, now clear-beaming over Chaos, nay now by fits gone out, disastrously eclipsed: this only shalt thou strive to follow. O, it is a business, as I fancy, that of weltering your way through Chaos and the murk of Hell! Green-eyed dragons watching you, three-headed Cerberuses, — not without sympathy of *their* sort! "*Eccovi l' uom ch' è stato all' Inferno.*"³ For in fine, as Poet Dryden says, you do walk hand in hand with sheer Madness, all the way, — who is by no means pleasant

company! You look fixedly into Madness, and *her* undiscovered, boundless, bottomless Night-empire; that you may extort new Wisdom out of it, as an Eurydice from Tartarus. The higher the Wisdom, the closer was its neighborhood and kindred with mere Insanity; literally so; — and thou wilt, with a speechless feeling, observe how highest Wisdom, struggling up into this world, has oftentimes carried such tinctures and adhesions of Insanity still cleaving to it hither!

All Works, each in their degree, are a making of Madness sane; — truly enough a religious operation; which cannot be carried on without religion. You have not work otherwise; you have eye-service, greedy grasping of wages, swift and ever swifter manufacture of semblances to get hold of wages. Instead of better felt-hats to cover your head, you have bigger lath-and-plaster hats set travelling the streets on wheels. Instead of heavenly and earthly Guidance for the souls of men, you have "Black or White Surplice" Controversies, stuffed hair-and-leather Popes; — terrestrial *Law-wards*, Lords and Law-bringers, "organizing Labor" in these years, by passing Corn-Laws. With all which, alas, this distracted Earth is now full, nigh to bursting. Semblances most smooth to the touch and eye; most accursed, nevertheless, to body and soul. Semblances, be they of Shamwoven Cloth or of Dilettante Legislation, which are *not* real wool or substance, but Devil's-dust, accursed of God and man! No man has worked, or can work, except religiously; not even the poor day-laborer, the weaver of your coat, the sewer of your shoes. All men, if they work not as in a Great Taskmaster's eye will work wrong, work unhappily for themselves and you.

Industrial work, still under bondage to Mammon, the rational soul of it not yet awakened, is a tragic spectacle. Men in the rapidest motion and self-motion; restless, with convulsive energy, as if driven by Galvanism, as if possessed by a Devil: tearing asunder mountains, — to no purpose, for Mammonism is always Midas-eared! This is sad, on the face of it. Yet courage: the beneficent Destinies, kind in their sternness, are apprising us that this cannot continue. Labor is not a devil, even while encased in Mammonism; Labor is ever an imprisoned god, writhing unconsciously or consciously to escape out of Mammonism!

¹ Mothers of Destiny or Fates.

² Shades of Hades in Greek Mythology.

³ "Behold the man who has been in Hell!" said of Dante.

Plugson of Undershot, like Taillefer¹ of Normandy, wants victory; how much happier will even Plugson be to have a Chivalrous victory than a Chactaw one! The unredeemed ugliness is that of a slothful People. Show me a People energetically busy; heaving, struggling, all shoulders at the wheel; their heart pulsing, every muscle swelling, with man's energy and will; — I show you a People of whom great good is already predictable; to whom all manner of good is yet certain, if their energy endure. By very working, they will learn; they have, Antæus-like, their foot on Mother Fact: how can they but learn?

The vulgarest Plugson of a Master-Worker, who can command Workers, and get work out of them, is already a considerable man. Blessed and thrice-blessed symptoms I discern of Master-Workers who are not vulgar men; who are Nobles, and begin to feel that they must act as such: all speed to these, they are England's hope at present! But in this Plugson himself, conscious of almost no nobleness whatever, how much is there! Not without man's faculty, insight, courage, hard energy, is this rugged figure. His words none of the wisest; but his actings cannot be altogether foolish. Think, how were it, stoodst thou suddenly in his shoes! He has to command a thousand men. And not imaginary commanding; no, it is real, incessantly practical. The evil passions of so many men (with the Devil in them, as in all of us) he has to vanquish; by manifold force of speech and of silence, to repress or evade. What a force of silence, to say nothing of the others, is in Plugson! For these his thousand men he has to provide raw-material, machinery, arrangement, houseroom; and ever at the week's end, wages by due sale. No Civil-List, or Goulburn-Baring² Budget has he to fall back upon, for paying of his regiment; he has to pick his supplies from the confused face of the whole Earth and Contemporaneous History, by his dexterity alone. There will be dry eyes if he fail to do it! — He exclaims, at present, "black in the face," near strangled with Dilettante Legislation: "Let me have elbow-room, throat-room, and I will not fail! No, I will spin yet, and conquer like a giant: what 'sinews of war' lie in me, untold resources towards the Conquest

of this Planet, if instead of hanging me, you husband them, and help me!" — My indomitable friend, it is *true*; and thou shalt and must be helped.

This is not a man I would kill and strangle by Corn-Laws, even if I could! No, I would fling my Corn-Laws and Shotbelts to the Devil; and try to help this man. I would teach him, by noble precept and law-precept, by noble example most of all, that Mammonism was not the essence of his or of my station in God's Universe; but the adscititious excrescence of it; the gross, terrene, godless embodiment of it; which would have to become, more or less, a godlike one. By noble *real* legislation, by true *noble's*-work, by unwearied, valiant, and were it wageless effort, in my Parliament and in my Parish, I would aid, constrain, encourage him to effect more or less this blessed change. I should know that it would have to be effected; that unless it were in some measure effected, he and I and all of us, I first and soonest of all were doomed to perdition! — Effected it will be; unless it were a Demon that made this Universe; which I, for my own part, do at no moment, under no form, in the least believe.

May it please your Serene Highness, your Majesties, Lordships and Law-wardships, the proper Epic of this world is not now "Arms and the Man;" how much less, "Shirt-frills and the Man:" no, it is now "Tools and the Man:" that, henceforth to all time, is now our Epic; — and you, first of all others, I think, were wise to take note of that!

CHAPTER XIII

DEMOCRACY

If the Serene Highnesses and Majesties do not take note of that, then, as I perceive, *that* will take note of itself! The time for levity, insincerity, and idle babble and play-acting, in all kinds, is gone by; it is a serious, grave time. Old long-vexed questions, not yet solved in logical words or parliamentary laws, are fast solving themselves in facts, somewhat unblest to behold! This largest of questions, this question of Work and Wages, which ought, had we heeded Heaven's voice, to have begun two generations ago or more, cannot be delayed longer without hearing Earth's voice. "Labor" will verily need to be somewhat "organized," as they say, — God knows with what difficulty. Man will actually need to have his debts and earnings a little better paid by man; which, let Parliaments speak of them or be silent of them, are

¹ The Minstrel who rode in front of the Norman army at the Battle of Hastings, tossing his sword in the air and catching it as it fell. Chanting *The Song of Roland*, he was the first to fall in battle.

² Henry Goulburn (1784-1856) was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1841 to 1846, succeeding in that office Sir Francis Thornhill Baring (1796-1866).

eternally his due from man, and cannot, without penalty and at length not without death-penalty, be withheld. How much ought to cease among us straightway; how much ought to begin straightway, while the hours yet are!

Truly they are strange results to which this of leaving all to "Cash;" of quietly shutting-up the God's Temple, and gradually opening wide-open the Mammon's Temple, with "Laissez-faire, and Every man for himself,"¹⁰ have led us in these days! We have Upper, speaking-Classes, who indeed do "speak" as never man spake before; the withered flimsiness, the godless baseness and barrenness of whose Speech might of itself indicate what kind of Doing and practical Governing went on under it! For Speech is the gaseous element out of which most kinds of Practice and Performance, especially all kinds of moral Performance, condense themselves, and take shape; as the one is, so will the other be. Descending, accordingly, into the Dumb Class in its Stockport Cellars and Poor-Law Bastilles, have we not to announce that they also are hitherto unexampled in the History of Adam's Posterity?

Life was never a May-game for men: in all times the lot of the dumb millions born to toil was defaced with manifold sufferings, injustices, heavy burdens, avoidable and unavoidable; not play at all, but hard work that made the sinews sore and the heart sore. As bond-slaves, *villani*, *bordarii*, *sochemanni*, nay indeed as dukes, earls and kings, men were oftentimes made weary of their life; and had to say, in the sweat of their brow and of their soul, Behold, it is not sport, it is grim earnest, and our back can bear no more! Who knows not what mas-sacrings and harryings there have been; grinding, long-continuing, unbearable injustices, — till the heart had to rise in madness, and some "*Eu Sachsen, nimith euer sachsen*, You Saxons, out with your gully-knives, then!" You Saxons, some "arrestment," partial "arrestment of the Knaves and Dastards" has become indispensable! — The page of Dryasdust is heavy with such details.

And yet I will venture to believe that in no time, since the beginnings of Society, was the lot of those same dumb millions of toilers so entirely unbearable as it is even in the days now passing over us. It is not to die, or even to die of hunger, that makes a man wretched; many men have died; all men must die, — the last exit of us all is in a Fire-

Chariot of Pain. But it is to live miserable we know not why; to work sore and yet gain nothing; to be heart-worn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated, girt-in with a cold universal Laissez-faire: it is to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice, as in the accursed iron belly of a Phalaris' Bull! This is and remains forever intolerable to all men whom God has made. Do we wonder at French Revolutions, Chartisms, Revolts of Three Days?¹ The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled.

Never before did I hear of an Irish Widow reduced to "prove her sisterhood by dying of typhus-fever and infecting seventeen persons," — saying in such undeniable way, "You see I was your sister!" Sisterhood, brotherhood, was often forgotten; but not till the rise of these ultimate Mammon and Shotbelt Gospels did I ever see it so expressly denied. If no pious Lord or *Lawward* would remember it, always some pious Lady ("*Hlaf-dig*," Benefactress, "*Loaf-giveress*," they say she is, — blessings on her beautiful heart!) was there, with mild mother-voice and hand, to remember it; some pious thoughtful *Elder*, what we now call "Prester," *Presbyter* or "Priest," was there to put all men in mind of it, in the name of the God who had made all.

Not even in Black Dahomey was it ever, I think, forgotten to the typhus-fever length. Mungo Park, resourceless, had sunk down to die under the Negro Village-Tree, a horrible White object in the eyes of all. But in the poor Black Woman, and her daughter who stood aghast at him, whose earthly wealth and funded capital consisted of one small calabash of rice, there lived a heart richer than *Laissez-faire*: they, with a royal munificence, boiled their rice for him; they sang all night to him, spinning assiduous on their cotton distaffs, as he lay to sleep: "Let us pity the poor white man; no mother has he to fetch him milk, no sister to grind him corn!" Thou poor black Noble One, — thou *Lady* too: did not a God make thee too; was there not in thee too something of a God! —

Gurth,² born thrall of Cedric the Saxon, has been greatly pitied by Dryasdust and others. Gurth, with the brass collar round his neck, tending Cedric's pigs in the glades of the wood, is not what I call an exemplar of human felicity: but Gurth, with the sky

¹ The "three days of July," 1830, when Charles X was dethroned and forced to flee from Paris.

² See *Ivanhoe*, chapter I.

above him, with the free air and tinted
 bosage and umbrage round him, and in him
 at least the certainty of supper and social
 lodging when he came home; Gurth to me
 seems happy, in comparison with many a
 Lancashire and Buckinghamshire man of
 these days, not born thrall of anybody!
 Gurth's brass collar did not gall him: Cedric
deserved to be his master. The pigs were
 Cedric's, but Gurth too would get his parings
 of them. Gurth had the inexpressible satis-
 faction of feeling himself related indissolu-
 bly, though in a rude brass-collar way, to his
 fellow-mortals in this Earth. He had su-
 periors, inferiors, equals.—Gurth is now
 "emancipated" long since; has what we call
 "Liberty." Liberty, I am told, is a divine
 thing. Liberty when it becomes the "Lib-
 erty to die by starvation" is not so divine!

Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you
 would say, consisted in his finding out, or
 being forced to find out the right path, and
 to walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught,
 what work he actually was able for; and then
 by permission, persuasion, and even com-
 pulsion, to set about doing of the same!
 That is his true blessedness, honor, "lib-
 erty" and maximum of wellbeing; if liberty
 be not that, I for one have small care about
 liberty. You do not allow a palpable mad-
 man to leap over precipices; you violate his
 liberty, you that are wise; and keep him,
 were it in strait-waistcoats, away from the
 precipices! Every stupid, every cowardly
 and foolish man is but a less palpable mad-
 man: his true liberty were that a wiser man,
 that any and every wiser man, could, by
 brass collars, or in whatever milder or sharper
 way, lay hold of him when he was going
 wrong, and order and compel him to go a
 little righter. O, if thou really art my
Senior, Seigneur, my *Elder*, Presbyter or
 Priest,—if thou art in very deed my *Wiser*,
 may a beneficent instinct lead and impel
 thee to "conquer" me, to command me! If
 thou do know better than I what is good
 and right, I conjure thee in the name of
 God, force me to do it; were it by never such
 brass collars, whips and handcuffs, leave me
 not to walk over precipices! That I have
 been called, by all the Newspapers, a "free
 man" will avail me little, if my pilgrimage
 have ended in death and wreck. O that the
 Newspapers had called me slave, coward,
 fool, or what it pleased their sweet voices to
 name me, and I had attained not death, but
 life!—Liberty requires new definitions.

A conscious abhorrence and intolerance of

Folly, of Baseness, Stupidity, Poltroonery
 and all that brood of things, dwells deep in
 some men: still deeper in others an uncon-
 scious abhorrence and intolerance, clothed
 moreover by the beneficent Supreme Powers
 in what stout appetites, energies, egoisms
 so-called, are suitable to it;—these latter
 are your Conquerors, Romans, Normans,
 Russians, Indo-English; Founders of what
 we call Aristocracies. Which indeed have
 they not the most "divine right" to found;
 —being themselves very truly *Αριστοι*,
 BRAVEST, BEST; and conquering generally a
 confused rabble of WORST, or at lowest,
 clearly enough, of WORSE? I think their
 divine right, tried, with affirmatory verdict,
 in the greatest Law-Court known to me, was
 good! A class of men who are dreadfully
 exclaimed against by Dryasdust; of whom
 nevertheless beneficent Nature has oftentimes
 had need; and may, alas, again have need.

When, across the hundredfold poor scepti-
 cisms, trivialisms and constitutional cob-
 webberies of Dryasdust, you catch any
 glimpse of a William the Conqueror, a Tan-
 cred of Hauteville or suchlike,—do you not
 discern veritably some rude outline of a true
 God-made King; whom not the Champion of
 England cased in tin, but all Nature and the
 Universe were calling to the throne? It is
 absolutely necessary that he get thither.
 Nature does not mean her poor Saxon
 children to perish, of obesity, stupor or other
 malady, as yet: a stern Ruler and Line of
 Rulers therefore is called in,—a stern but
 most beneficent *perpetual House-Surgeon* is
 by Nature herself called in, and even the ap-
 propriate *fees* are provided for him! Dryas-
 dust talks lamentably about Hereward and
 the Fen Counties; fate of Earl Waltheof;
 Yorkshire and the North reduced to ashes:
 all which is undoubtedly lamentable.¹ But
 even Dryasdust apprises me of one fact: "A
 child, in this William's reign, might have
 carried a purse of gold from end to end of
 England." My erudite friend, it is a fact
 which outweighs a thousand! Sweep away
 thy constitutional, sentimental and other
 cobwebberies; look eye to eye, if thou still
 have any eye, in the face of this big burly
 William Bastard: thou wilt see a fellow of
 most flashing discernment, of most strong
 lion-heart;—in whom, as it were, within a
 frame of oak and iron, the gods have planted
 the soul of "a man of genius"! Dost thou
 call that nothing? I call it an immense
 thing!—Rage enough was in this Willemus

¹ A reference to revolts which William suppressed.

Conquæstor, rage enough for his occasions; — and yet the essential element of him, as of all such men, is not scorching *fire*, but shining illuminative *light*. Fire and light are strangely interchangeable; nay, at bottom, I have found them different forms of the same most godlike "elementary substance" in our world: a thing worth stating in these days. The essential element of this Conquæstor is, first of all, the most sun-eyed perception of what *is* really what on this God's Earth; — which, thou wilt find, does mean at bottom "Justice," and "Virtues" not a few: *Conformity* to what the Maker has seen good to make; that, I suppose, will mean Justice and a Virtue or two? —

Dost thou think Willemus Conquæstor would have tolerated ten years' jargon, one hour's jargon, on the propriety of killing Cotton-manufacturers by partridge Corn-Laws? I fancy, this was not the man to knock out of his night's-rest with nothing but a noisy bedlamism in your mouth! "Assist us still better to bush the partridges; strangle Plugson who spins the shirts?" — "*Par la Splendeur de Dieu!*" — Dost thou think Willemus Conquæstor, in this new time, with Steam-engine Captains of Industry on one hand of him, and Joe-Manton¹ Captains of Idleness on the other, would have doubted which *was* really the BEST; which did deserve strangling, and which not?

I have a certain indestructible regard for Willemus Conquæstor. A resident House-Surgeon, provided by Nature for her beloved English People, and even furnished with the requisite fees, as I said; for he by no means felt himself doing Nature's work, this Willemus, but his own work exclusively! And his own work withal it was; informed "*par la Splendeur de Dieu.*" — I say, it is necessary to get the work out of such a man, however harsh that be! When a world, not yet doomed for death, is rushing down to ever-deeper Baseness and Confusion, it is a dire necessity of Nature's to bring in her ARISTOCRACIES, her BEST, even by forcible methods. When their descendants or representatives cease entirely to be the Best, Nature's poor world will very soon rush down again to Baseness; and it becomes a dire necessity of Nature's to cast them out. Hence French Revolutions, Five-point Charters, Democracies, and a mournful list of *Etceteras*, in these our afflicted times.

To what extent Democracy has now

¹ Joseph Manton (1766–1835) was a gun-smith. His name suggests the sporting aristocracy.

reached, how it advances irresistible with ominous, ever-increasing speed, he that will open his eyes on any province of human affairs may discern. Democracy is everywhere the inexorable demand of these ages, swiftly fulfilling itself. From the thunder of Napoleon battles, to the jabbering of Open-vestry in St. Mary Axe, all things announce Democracy. A distinguished man, whom some of my readers will hear again with pleasure, thus writes to me what in these days he notes from the Wahngasse of Weissenichtwo, where our London fashions seem to be in full vogue. Let us hear the Herr Teufelsdröckh again, were it but the smallest word!

"Democracy, which means despair of finding any Heroes to govern you, and contented putting-up with the want of them, — alas, thou too, *mein Lieber*, seest well how close it is of kin to *Atheism*, and other sad *Isms*: he who discovers no God whatever, how shall he discover Heroes, the visible Temples of God? — Strange enough meanwhile it is, to observe with what thoughtlessness, here in our rigidly Conservative Country, men rush into Democracy with full cry. Beyond doubt, his Excellenz the Titular-Herr Ritter Kauderwälsch von Pferdefuss-Quacksalber, he our distinguished Conservative Premier himself, and all but the thicker-headed of his Party, discern Democracy to be inevitable as death, and are even desperate of delaying it much!

"You cannot walk the streets without beholding Democracy announce itself: the very Tailor has become, if not properly Sansculottic, which to him would be ruinous, yet a Tailor unconsciously symbolizing, and prophesying with his scissors, the reign of Equality. What now is our fashionable coat? A thing of super-finest texture, of deeply meditated cut; with Malineslace cuffs; quilted with gold; so that a man can carry, without difficulty, an estate of land on his back? *Keineswegs*, By no manner of means! The Sumptuary Laws have fallen into such a state of desuetude as was never before seen. Our fashionable coat is an amphibium between barn-sack and drayman's doublet. The cloth of it is studiously coarse; the color a speckled soot-black or rust-brown gray; the nearest approach to a Peasant's. And for shape, — thou shouldst see it! The last consummation of the year now passing over us is definable as Three Bags; a big bag for the body, two small bags for the arms, and by way of collar a hem! The first Antique

Cheruscan ¹ who, of felt-cloth or bear's-hide, with bone or metal needle, set about making himself a coat, before Tailors had yet awakened out of Nothing, — did not he make it even so? A loose wide poke for body, with two holes to let out the arms; this was his original coat: to which holes it was soon visible that two small loose pokes, or sleeves, easily appended, would be an improvement.

"Thus has the Tailor-art, so to speak, overset itself, like most other things; changed its centre-of-gravity; whirled suddenly over from zenith to nadir. Your Stulz, with huge somerset, vaults from his high shopboard down to the depths of primal savagery, — carrying much along with him! For I will invite thee to reflect that the Tailor, as topmost ultimate froth of Human Society, is indeed swift-passing, evanescent, slippery to decipher; yet significant of much, nay of all. Topmost evanescent froth, he is churned-up from the very lees, and from all intermediate regions of the liquor. The general outcome he, visible to the eye, of what men aimed to do, and were obliged and enabled to do, in this one public department of symbolizing themselves to each other by covering of their skins. A smack of all Human Life lies in the Tailor: its wild struggles towards beauty, dignity, freedom, victory; and how, hemmed-in by Sedan and Huddersfield, by Nescience, Dulness, Prurience, and other sad necessities and laws of Nature, it has attained just to this: Gray savagery of Three Sacks with a hem!

"When the very Tailor verges towards Sansculottism, is it not ominous? The last Divinity of poor mankind dethroning himself; sinking *his* taper too, flame downmost, like the Genius of Sleep or of Death; admonitory that Tailor time shall be no more! — For, little as one could advise Sumptuary Laws at the present epoch, yet nothing is clearer than that where ranks do actually exist, strict division of costumes will also be enforced; that if we ever have a new Hierarchy and Aristocracy, acknowledged veritably as such, for which I daily pray Heaven, the Tailor will reawaken; and be, by volunteering and appointment, consciously and unconsciously, a safeguard of that same." — Certain farther observations, from the same invaluable pen, on our never-ending changes of mode, our "perpetual nomadic and even ape-like appetite for change and mere change" in all the equipments of our existence, and the "fatal revolutionary char-

acter" thereby manifested, we suppress for the present. It may be admitted that Democracy, in all meanings of the word, is in full career; irresistible by any Ritter Kauderwälsch or other Son of Adam as times go. "Liberty" is a thing men are determined to have.

But truly, as I had to remark in the meanwhile, "the liberty of not being oppressed by your fellow man" is an indispensable, yet one of the most insignificant fractional parts of Human Liberty. No man oppresses thee, can bid thee fetch or carry, come or go, without reason shown. True; from all men thou art emancipated: but from Thyself and from the Devil —? No man, wiser, unwiser, can make thee come or go; but thy own futilities, bewilderments, thy false appetites for Money, Windsor Georges² and suchlike? No man oppresses thee, O free and independent Franchiser: but does not this stupid Porter-pot oppress thee? No Son of Adam can bid thee come or go; but this absurd Pot of Heavy-wet, this can and does! Thou art the thrall not of Cedric the Saxon, but of thy own brutal appetites and this scoured dish of liquor. And thou pratest of thy "liberty?" Thou entire blockhead!

Heavy-wet and gin: alas, these are not the only kinds of thralldom. Thou who walkest in a vain show, looking out with ornamental diletante sniff and serene supremacy at all Life and all Death; and amblest jauntily; perking up thy poor talk into crotchets, thy poor conduct into fatuous somnambulisms; — and art as an "enchanted Ape" under God's sky, where thou mightest have been a man, had proper Schoolmasters and Conquerors, and Constables with cat-o'-nine tails, been vouchsafed thee; dost thou call that "liberty"? Or your unreposing Mammon-worshipper again, driven, as if by Galvanisms, by Devils, and Fixed-ideas, who rises early and sits late, chasing the impossible; straining every faculty to "fill himself with the east wind," — how merciful were it, could you, by mild persuasion, or by the severest tyranny so-called, check him in his mad path, and turn him into a wiser one! All painful tyranny, in that case again, were but mild "surgery;" the pain of it cheap, as health and life, instead of galvanism and fixed-idea, are cheap at any price.

Sure enough, of all paths a man could strike into, there *is*, at any given moment, a *best path* for every man; a thing which, here and now, it were of all things *wisest* for him

¹ A German tribe in the time of Cæsar.

² Decorations granted by King George.

to do; — which could he be but led or driven to do, he were then doing “like a man,” as we phrase it; all men and gods agreeing with him, the whole Universe virtually exclaiming Well-done to him! His success, in such case, were complete; his felicity a maximum. This path, to find this path and walk in it, is the one thing needful for him. Whatsoever forwards him in that, let it come to him even in the shape of blows and spurnings, is liberty: whatsoever hinders him, were it ward-motes, open-vestries pollbooths, tremendous cheers, rivers of heavy-wet, is slavery.

The notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at election-hustings, and saying, “Behold, now I too have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver; will not all the gods be good to me?” — is one of the pleasantest! Nature nevertheless is kind at present; and puts it into the heads of many, almost of all. The liberty especially which has to purchase itself by social isolation, and each man standing separate from the other, having “no business with him”; but a cash-account: this is such a liberty as the Earth seldom saw; — as the Earth will not long put up with, recommend it how you may. This liberty turns out, before it have long continued in action, with all men flinging up their caps round it, to be, for the Working Millions a liberty to die by want of food; for the Idle Thousands and Units, alas, a still more fatal liberty to live in want of work; to have no earnest duty to do in this God's-World any more. What becomes a man in such predicament? Earth's Laws are silent; and Heaven's speak in a voice which is not heard. No work, and the ineradicable need of work, give rise to new very wondrous life-philosophies, new very wondrous life-practices! Dilettantism, Pococurantism,¹ Beau-Brummelism, with perhaps an occasional, half-mad, protesting burst of Byronism, establish themselves: at the end of a certain period, — if you go back to “the Dead Sea,” there is, say our Moslem friends, a very strange “Sabbath-day” transacting itself there! — Brethren, we know but imperfectly yet, after ages of Constitutional Government, what Liberty and Slavery are.

Democracy, the chase of Liberty in that direction, shall go its full course; unrestrainable by him of Pferdefuss-Quacksalber, or any of *his* household. The Toiling Millions

of Mankind, in most vital need and passionate instinctive desire of Guidance, shall cast away False-Guidance; and hope, for an hour, that No-Guidance will suffice them: but it can be for an hour only. The smallest item of human Slavery is the oppression of man by his Mock-Superiors; the palpablest, but I say at bottom the smallest. Let him shake-off such oppression, trample it indignantly under his feet; I blame him not, I pity and commend him. But oppression by your Mock-Superiors well shaken off, the grand problem yet remains to solve: That of finding government by your Real-Superiors! Alas, how shall we ever learn the solution of that, benighted, bewildered, sniffing, sneering, godforgetting unfortunates as we are? It is a work for centuries; to be taught us by tribulations, confusions, insurrections, obstructions; who knows if not by conflagration and despair! It is a lesson inclusive of all other lessons; the hardest of all lessons to learn.

One thing I do know: Those Apes, chattering on the branches by the Dead Sea, never got it learned; but chatter there to this day. To them no Moses need come a second time; a thousand Moseses would be but so many painted Phantasms, interesting Fellow-Apes of new strange aspect, — whom they would “invite to dinner,” be glad to meet with in lion-soirées. To them the voice of Prophecy, of heavenly monition, is quite ended. They chatter there, all Heaven shut to them, to the end of the world. The unfortunates! Oh, what is dying of hunger, with honest tools in your hand, with a manful purpose in your heart, and much real labor lying round you done, in comparison? You honestly quit your tools; quit a most muddy confused coil of sore work, short rations, of sorrows, dispiritments and contradictions, having now honestly done with it all; — and await, not entirely in a distracted manner, what the Supreme Powers, and the Silences and the Eternities may have to say to you.

A second thing I know: This lesson will have to be learned, — under penalties! England will either learn it, or England also will cease to exist among Nations. England will either learn to reverence its Heroes, and discriminate them from its Sham-Heroes and Valets and gaslighted Histrios; and to prize them as the audible God's-voice, amid all inane jargons and temporary market-cries, and say to them with heart-loyalty, “Be ye King and Priest, and Gospel and Guidance

¹ Pococurantism, from Pococurante, a character in Voltaire's *Candide*, who, with wealth and command of all the arts, is yet incapable of enjoyment.

for us:" or else England will continue to worship new and ever-new forms of Quackhood, — and so, with what resiliences and reboundings matters little, go down to the Father of Quacks! Can I dread such things of England? Wretched, thick-eyed, gross-hearted mortals, why will ye worship lies, and "Stuffed Clothes-suits created by the ninth-parts of men!" It is not your purses that suffer; your farm-rents, your com-
 10 merces, your mill-revenues, loud as ye lament over these; no, it is not these alone, but a far deeper than these: it is your souls that lie dead, crushed down under despicable Nightmares, Atheisms; Brain-fumes; and are not souls at all, but mere succedanea for
 15 salt to keep your bodies and their appetites from putrefying! Your cotton-spinning and thrice-miraculous mechanism, what is this too, by itself, but a larger kind of Animalism? Spiders can spin, Beavers can build and show contrivance; the Ant lays-up accumulation of capital, and has, for aught I know, a Bank of Antland. If there is no soul in man higher than all that, did it reach to sailing on the cloud-rack and spinning sea-sand; then I say, man is but an animal, a more cunning
 20 kind of brute: he has no soul, but only a succedaneum for salt. Whereupon, seeing himself to be truly of the beasts that perish, he ought to admit it, I think; — and also straightway universally to kill himself; and so, in a manlike manner at least end, and wave these brute-worlds his dignified farewell! —

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

ARISTOCRACIES

To predict the Future, to manage the Present, would not be so impossible, had not the Past been so sacrilegiously mishandled; effaced, and what is worse, defaced! The Past cannot be seen; the Past, looked at
 45 through the medium of "Philosophical History," in these times, cannot even be *not* seen: it is misseen; affirmed to have existed, — and to have been a godless impossibility. Your Norman Conquerors, true royal souls, crowned kings as such, were vulturous irra-
 50 tional tyrants; your Becket was a noisy egotist and hypocrite; getting his brains spilt on the floor of Canterbury Cathedral, to secure the main chance, — somewhat uncertain how! "Policy, Fanaticism;" or say "Enthusiasm," even "honest Enthusiasm," — ah yes, of course:

"The Dog, to gain his private ends,
 Went mad, and bit the Man!" —

For in truth, the eye sees in all things "what it brought with it the means of seeing." A godless century, looking back on centuries that were godly, produces portraiture more miraculous than any other. All was inane discord in the Past; brute Force bore rule everywhere; Stupidity, savage Unreason, fitter for Bedlam than for a human World! Whereby indeed it becomes sufficiently natural that the like qualities, in new sleeker habiliments, should continue in our time to rule. Millions enchanted in Bastille Workhouses; Irish Widows proving their relationship by typhus-fever: what would you have? It was ever so, or worse. Man's History, was it not always even this: The cookery and eating-up of imbecile
 20 Dupedom by successful Quackhood; the battle, with various weapons, of vulturous Quack and Tyrant against vulturous Tyrant and Quack? No God was in the Past Time; nothing but Mechanisms and Chaotic Brute-Gods: — how shall the poor "Philosophic Historian," to whom his own century is all godless, see any God in other centuries?

Men believe in Bibles, and disbelieve in them: but of all Bibles the frightfullest to disbelieve in is this "Bible of Universal History." This is the Eternal Bible and God's-Book, "which every born man," till once the soul and eyesight are extinguished in him, "can and must, with his own eyes, see the
 35 God's-Finger writing!" To discredit this, is an *infidelity* like no other. Such infidelity you would punish, if not by fire and faggot, which are difficult to manage in our times, yet by the most peremptory order, To hold its peace till it got something wiser to say.
 40 Why should the blessed Silence be broken into noises, to communicate only the like of this? If the Past have no God's-Reason in it, nothing but Devil's-Unreason, let the Past be eternally forgotten: mention *it* no more; — we whose ancestors were all hanged, why should we talk of ropes!

It is, in brief, not true that men ever lived by Delirium, Hypocrisy, Injustice, or any form of Unreason, since they came to inhabit this Planet. It is not true that they ever did, or ever will, live except by the reverse of these. Men will again be taught this. Their acted History will then again be a Heroism; their written History, what it once was, an Epic. Nay, forever it is either such, or else it virtually is — Nothing. Were it written in a thousand volumes, the Unheroic of such

volumes hastens incessantly to be forgotten: the net content of an Alexandrian Library of Unheroics is, and will ultimately show itself to be, *zero*. What man is interested to remember *it*; have not all men, at all times, the liveliest interest to forget it? — “Revelations,” if not celestial, then infernal, will teach us that God is; we shall then, if needful, discern without difficulty that He has always been! The Dryasdust Philosophisms and enlightened Scepticisms of the Eighteenth Century, historical and other, will have to survive for a while with the Physiologists, as a memorable *Nightmare-Dream*. All this haggard epoch, with its ghastly Doctrines, and death’s-head Philosophies “teaching by example” or otherwise, will one day have become, what to our Moslem friends their godless ages are, “the Period of Ignorance.”

If the convulsive struggles of the last Half-Century have taught poor struggling convulsed Europe any truth, it may perhaps be this as the essence of innumerable others: That Europe requires a real Aristocracy, a real Priesthood, or it cannot continue to exist. Huge French Revolutions, Napoleonisms, then Bourbonisms with their corollary of Three Days, finishing in very unfinal Louis-Philippisms: all this ought to be didactic! All this may have taught us, That False Aristocracies are insupportable; that No-Aristocracies, Liberty-and-Equalities are impossible; that true Aristocracies are at once indispensable and not easily attained.

Aristocracy and Priesthood, a Governing Class and a Teaching Class: these two, sometimes separate, and endeavoring to harmonize themselves, sometimes conjoined as one, and the King a Pontiff-King: — there did no Society exist without these two vital elements, there will none exist. It lies in the very nature of man: you will visit no remotest village in the most republican country of the world, where virtually or actually you do not find these two powers at work. Man, little as he may suppose it, is necessitated to obey superiors. He is a social being in virtue of this necessity; nay he could not be gregarious otherwise. He obeys those whom he esteems better than himself, wiser, braver; and will forever obey such; and even be ready and delighted to do it.

The Wiser, Braver: these, a Virtual Aristocracy everywhere and everywhen, do in all Societies that reach any articulate shape, develop themselves into a ruling class, an Actual Aristocracy, with settled modes of

operating, what are called laws and even *private-laws* or privileges, and so forth; very notable to look upon in this world. — Aristocracy and Priesthood, we say, are sometimes united. For indeed the Wiser and the Braver are properly but one class; no wise man but needed first of all to be a brave man, or he never had been wise. The noble Priest was always a noble *Aristos* to begin with, and something more to end with. Your Luther, your Knox, your Anselm, Becket, Abbot Samson, Samuel Johnson, if they had not been brave enough, by what possibility could they ever have been wise? — If, from accident or forethought, this your Actual Aristocracy have got discriminated into Two Classes, there can be no doubt but the Priest Class is the more dignified; supreme over the other, as governing head is over active hand. And yet in practice again, it is likeliest the reverse will be found arranged; — a sign that the arrangement is already vitiated; that a split is introduced into it, which will widen and widen till the whole be rent asunder.

In England, in Europe generally, we may say that these two Virtualities have unfolded themselves into Actualities, in by far the noblest and richest manner any region of the world ever saw. A spiritual Guideship, a practical Governorship, fruit of the grand conscious endeavors, say rather of the immeasurable unconscious instincts and necessities of men, have established themselves; very strange to behold. Everywhere, while so much has been forgotten, you find the King’s Palace, and the Viceking’s Castle, Mansion, Manorhouse; till there is not an inch of ground from sea to sea but has both its King and Viceking, long due series of Vicekings, its Squire, Earl, Duke or whatever the title of him, — to whom you have given the land, that he may govern you in it.

More touching still, there is not a hamlet where poor peasants congregate, but, by one means and another, a Church-Apparatus has been got together, — roofed edifice, with revenues and belfries; pulpit, reading-desk, with Books and Methods: possibility, in short, and strict prescription, That a man stand there and speak of spiritual things to men. It is beautiful; — even in its great obscurity and decadence, it is among the beautifullest, most touching objects one sees on the Earth. This Speaking Man has indeed, in these times, wandered terribly from the point; has, alas, as it were, totally lost sight of the point: yet, at bottom, whom have we to compare with him? Of all public func-

tionaries boarded and lodged on the Industry of Modern Europe, is there one worthier of the board he has? A man even professing, and never so languidly making still some endeavor, to save the souls of men: contrast him with a man professing to do little but shoot the partridges of men! I wish he could find the point again, this Speaking One; and stick to it with tenacity, with deadly energy; for there is need of him yet! The Speaking Function, this of Truth coming to us with a living voice, nay in a living shape, and as a concrete practical exemplar: this, with all our Writing and Printing Functions, has a perennial place. Could he but find the point again, — take the old spectacles off his nose, and looking up discover, almost in contact with him, what the *real* Satanas, and soul-devouring, world-devouring *Devil*, now is! Original Sin and such-like are bad enough, I doubt not: but distilled Gin, dark Ignorance, Stupidity, dark Corn-Law, Bastille and Company, what are they! Will he discover our new real Satan, whom he has to fight; or go on droning through his old nose-spectacles about old extinct Satans; and never see the real one, till he *feel* him at his own throat and ours? That is a question, for the world! Let us not intermeddle with it here.

Sorrowful, phantasmal as this same Double Aristocracy of Teachers and Governors now looks, it is worth all men's while to know that the purport of it is and remains noble and most real. Dryasdust, looking merely at the surface, is greatly in error as to those ancient Kings. William Conqueror, William Rufus or Redbeard, Stephen Curthose himself, much more Henry Beaulerc and our brave Plantagenet Henry: the life of these men was not a vulturous Fighting; it was a valorous Governing, — to which occasionally Fighting did, and alas must yet, though far seldomer now, superadd itself as an accident, a distressing impedimental adjunct. The fighting too was indispensable, for ascertaining who had the might over whom, the right over whom. By much hard fighting, as we once said, "the unrealities, beaten into dust, flew gradually off;" and left the plain reality and fact, "Thou stronger than I; thou wiser than I; thou king, and subject I," in a somewhat clearer condition.

Truly we cannot enough admire, in those Abbot-Samson and William-Conqueror times, the arrangement they had made of their Governing Classes. Highly interesting

to observe how the sincere insight, on their part, into what did, of primary necessity, behove to be accomplished, had led them to the way of accomplishing it, and in the course of time to get it accomplished! No imaginary Aristocracy would serve their turn; and accordingly they attained a real one. The Bravest men, who, it is ever to be repeated and remembered, are also on the whole the Wisest, Strongest, every way Best, had here, with a respectable degree of accuracy, been got selected; seated each on his piece of territory, which was lent him, then gradually given him, that he might govern it. These Vicekings, each on his portion of the common soil of England, with a Head King over all, were a "Virtuality perfected into an Actuality" really to an astonishing extent.

For those were rugged stalwart ages; full of earnestness, of a rude God's-truth: — nay, at any rate, their *quitting* was so unspeakably *thinner* than ours; Fact came swiftly on them, if at any time they had yielded to Phantasm! "The Knaves and Dastards" had to be "arrested" in some measure; or the world, almost within year and day, found that it could not live. The Knaves and Dastards accordingly were got arrested. Dastards upon the very throne had to be got arrested, and taken off the throne, — by such methods as there were; by the roughest method, if there chanced to be no smoother one! Doubtless there was much harshness of operation, much severity; as indeed government and surgery are often somewhat severe. Gurth, born thrall of Cedric, it is like, got cuffs as often as pork-parings, if he misdeigned himself; but Gurth did belong to Cedric: no human creature then went about connected with nobody; left to go his way into Bastilles or worse, under *Laissez-faire*; reduced to prove his relationship by dying of typhus-fever! — Days come when there is no King in Israel, but every man is his own king, doing that which is right in his own eyes; — and tarbarrels are burnt to "Liberty," "Ten-pound Franchise" and the like, with considerable effect in various ways! —

That Feudal Aristocracy, I say, was no imaginary one. To a respectable degree, its *Jarls*, what we now call Earls, were *Strong-Ones* in fact as well as etymology; its Dukes *Leaders*; its Lords *Law-wards*. They did all the Soldiering and Police of the country, all the Judging, Law-making, even the Church-Extension; whatsoever in the way of Governing, of Guiding and Protecting

could be done. It was a Land Aristocracy; it managed the Governing of this English People, and had the reaping of the Soil of England in return. It is, in many senses, the Law of Nature, this same Law of Feudalism; — no right Aristocracy but a Land one! The curious are invited to meditate upon it in these days. Soldiering, Police and Judging, Church-Extension, nay real Government and Guidance, all this was actually *done* by the Holders of the Land in return for their Land. How much of it is now done by them; done by anybody? Good Heavens, "Laissez-faire, Do ye nothing, eat your wages and sleep," is everywhere the passionate half-wise cry of this time; and they will not so much as do nothing, but must do mere Corn-Laws! We raise Fifty-two millions, from the general mass of us, to get our Governing done — or, alas, to get ourselves persuaded that it is done: and the "peculiar burden of the Land" is to pay, not all this, but to pay, as I learn, one twenty-fourth part of all this. Our first Chartist Parliament, or Oliver *Redivivus*, you would say, will know where to lay the new taxes of England! — Or, alas, taxes? If we made the Holders of the Land pay every shilling still of the expense of Governing the Land, what were all that? The Land, by mere hired Governors, cannot be got governed. You cannot hire men to govern the Land; it is by mission not contracted for in the Stock-Exchange, but felt in their own hearts as coming out of Heaven, that men can govern a Land. The mission of a Land Aristocracy is a *sacred* one, in both the senses of that old word. The footing it stands on, at present, might give rise to thoughts other than of Corn-Laws! —

But truly a "Splendor of God," as in William Conqueror's rough oath, did dwell in those old rude veracious ages; did inform, more and more, with a heavenly nobleness, all departments of their work and life. Phantasms could not yet walk abroad in mere Cloth Tailorage; they were at least Phantasms "on the rim of the horizon," pencilled there by an eternal Lightbeam from within. A most "practical" Hero-worship went on, unconsciously or half-consciously, everywhere. A Monk Samson, with a maximum of two shillings in his pocket, could, without ballot-box, be made a Viceking of, being seen to be worthy. The difference between a good man and a bad man was as yet felt to be, what it forever is, an immeasurable one. Who *durst* have elected a Pan-

darus Dogdraught, in those days, to any office, Carlton Club, Senatorship, or place whatsoever? It was felt that the arch Satanas and no other had a clear right of property in Pandarus; that it were better for you to have no hand in Pandarus, to keep out of Pandarus his neighborhood! Which is, to this hour, the mere fact; though for the present, alas, the forgotten fact. I think they were comparatively blessed times those, in their way! "Violence," "war," "disorder:" well, what is war, and death itself, to such a perpetual life-in-death, and "peace, peace, where there is no peace"! Unless some Hero-worship, in its new appropriate form, can return, this world does not promise to be very habitable long.

Old Anselm, exiled Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the purest-minded "men of genius," was travelling to make his appeal to Rome against King Rufus, — a man of rough ways, in whom the "inner Lightbeam" shone very fitfully. It is beautiful to read, in Monk Eadmer,¹ how the Continental populations welcomed and venerated this Anselm, as no French population now venerates Jean-Jacques² or giant-killing Voltaire; as not even an American population now venerates a Schnüspel the distinguished Novelist! They had, by phantasy and true insight, the intensest conviction that a God's-Blessing dwelt in this Anselm, — as is my conviction too. They crowded round, with bent knees and enkindled hearts, to receive his blessing, to hear his voice, to see the light of his face. My blessings on them and on him! — But the notablest was a certain necessitous or covetous Duke of Burgundy, in straitened circumstances we shall hope, — who reflected that in all likelihood this English Archbishop, going towards Rome to appeal, must have taken store of cash with him to bribe the Cardinals. Wherefore he of Burgundy, for his part, decided to lie in wait and rob him. "In an open space of a wood," some "wood" then green and growing, eight centuries ago, in Burgundian Land, — this fierce Duke, with fierce steel followers, shaggy, savage, as the Russian bear, dashes out on the weak old Anselm; who is riding along there, on his small quiet-going pony; escorted only by Eadmer and another poor Monk on ponies; and, except small modicum of roadmoney, not a gold coin in his possession. The steelclad Rus-

¹ A twelfth-century monk of Canterbury who wrote the lives of Anselm and other ecclesiastics.

² Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78).

sian bear emerges, glaring: the old white-bearded man starts not,—paces on unmoved, looking into him with those clear old earnest eyes, with that venerable sorrowful time-worn face; of whom no man or thing need be afraid, and who also is afraid of no created man or thing. The fire-eyes of his Burgundian Grace meet these clear eye-glances, convey them swift to his heart: he bethinks him that probably this feeble, fearless, hoary Figure has in it something of the Most High God; that probably he shall be damned if he meddle with it,—that, on the whole, he had better not. He plunges, the rough savage, from his war-horse, down to his knees; embraces the feet of old Anselm: he too begs his blessing; orders men to escort him, guard him from being robbed, and under dread penalties see him safe on his way. *Per os Dei*,² as his Majesty was wont to ejaculate!

Neither is this quarrel of Rufus and Anselm, of Henry and Becket uninstructional to us. It was, at bottom, a great quarrel. For, admitting that Anselm was full of divine blessing, he by no means included in him all forms of divine blessing:—there were far other forms withal, which he little dreamed of; and William Redbeard was unconsciously the representative and spokesman of these. In truth, could your divine Anselm, your divine Pope Gregory have had their way, the results had been very notable. Our Western World had all become a European Thibet, with one Grand Lama sitting at Rome; our one honorable business that of singing mass, all day and all night. Which would not in the least have suited us. The Supreme Powers willed it not so.

It was as if King Redbeard unconsciously, addressing Anselm, Becket and the others, had said: "Right Reverend, your Theory of the Universe is indisputable by man or devil. To the core of our heart we feel that this divine thing, which you call Mother Church, does fill the whole world hitherto known, and is and shall be all our salvation and all our desire. And yet—and yet—Behold, though it is an unspoken secret, the world is *wider* than any of us think, Right Reverend! Behold, there are yet other immeasurable Sacrednesses in this that you call Heathenism, Secularity! On the whole, I, in an obscure but most rooted manner, feel that I cannot comply with you. Western Thibet and perpetual mass-chanting,—No. I am, so to speak, in the family-way; with child, of I

know not what,—certainly of something far different from this! I have—*Per os Dei*, I have Manchester Cotton-trades, Bromwicham Iron-trades, American Commonwealths, Indian Empires, Steam Mechanisms, and Shakespeare Dramas, in my belly; and cannot do it, Right Reverend!"—So accordingly it was decided: and Saxon Becket spilt his life in Canterbury Cathedral, as Scottish Wallace did on Tower-hill, and as generally a noble man and martyr has to do,—not for nothing; no, but for a divine something other than *he* had altogether calculated. We will now quit this of the hard, organic, but limited Feudal Ages; and glance timidly into the immense Industrial Ages, as yet all inorganic, and in a quite pulpy condition, requiring desperately to harden themselves into some organism!

Our Epic having now become *Tools and the Man*, it is more than usually impossible to prophesy the Future. The boundless Future does lie there, predestined, nay already extant though unseen; hiding, in its Continents of Darkness, "gladness and sorrow:" but the supremest intelligence of man cannot prefigure much of it:—the united intelligence and effort of All Men in all coming generations, this alone will gradually prefigure it, and figure and form it into a seen fact! Straining our eyes hitherto, the utmost effort of intelligence sheds but some most glimmering dawn, a little way into its dark enormous Deeps: only huge outlines loom uncertain on the sight; and the ray of prophecy, at a short distance, expires. But may we not say, here as always, Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof! To shape the whole Future is not our problem; but only to shape faithfully a small part of it, according to rules already known. It is perhaps possible for each of us, who will with due earnestness inquire, to ascertain clearly what he, for his own part, ought to do: this let him, with true heart, do, and continue doing. The general issue will, as it has always done, rest well with a Higher Intelligence than ours.

One grand "outline," or even two, many earnest readers may perhaps, at this stage of the business, be able to prefigure for themselves,—and draw some guidance from. One prediction, or even two, are already possible. For the Life-Tree Igdrasil, in all its new developments, is the selfsame world-old Life-tree: having found an element or elements there, running from the very roots of it in Hela's Realms, in the Well of Mimer and of the Three Nornas or *TIMES*, up to this

present hour of it in our own hearts, we conclude that such will have to continue. A man has, in his own soul, an Eternal; can read something of the Eternal there, if he will look! He already knows what will continue; what cannot, by any means or appliance whatsoever, be made to continue!

One wide and widest "outline" ought really, in all ways, to be becoming clear to us; this namely: That a "Splendor of God," in one form or other, will have to unfold itself from the heart of these our Industrial Ages too; or they will never get themselves "organized;" but continue chaotic, distressed, distracted evermore, and have to perish in frantic suicidal dissolution. A second "outline" or prophecy, narrower, but also wide enough, seems not less certain: That there will again be a King in Israel; a system of Order and Government; and every man shall, in some measure, see himself constrained to do that which is right in the King's eyes. This too we may call a sure element of the Future; for this too is of the Eternal; — this too is of the Present, though hidden from most; and without it no fibre of the Past ever was. An actual new Sovereignty, Industrial Aristocracy, real not imaginary Aristocracy, is indispensable and indubitable for us.

But what an Aristocracy; on what new, far more complex and cunningly devised conditions than that old Feudal fighting one! For we are to bethink us that the Epic verily is not *Arms and the Man*, but *Tools and the Man*, — an infinitely wider kind of Epic. And again we are to bethink us that men cannot now be bound to men by *brass-collars*, — not at all: that this brass-collar method, in all figures of it, has vanished out of Europe forevermore! Huge Democracy, walking the streets everywhere in its Sack Coat, has asserted so much; irrevocably, brooking no reply! True enough, man is forever the "born thrall" of certain men, born master of certain other men, born equal of certain others, let him acknowledge the fact or not. It is unblest for him when he cannot acknowledge this fact; he is in the chaotic state, ready to perish, till he do get the fact ac-

knowledgeed. But no man is, or can henceforth be, the brass-collar thrall of any man; you will have to bind him by other, far nobler and cunninger methods. Once for all, he is to be loose of the brass-collar, to have a scope as wide as his faculties now are: — will he not be all the usefuler to you in that new state? Let him go abroad as a trusted one, as a free one; and return home to you with rich earnings at night! Gurth could only tend pigs; this one will build cities, conquer waste worlds. — How, in conjunction with inevitable Democracy, indispensable Sovereignty is to exist: certainly it is the hugest question ever heretofore propounded to Mankind! The solution of which is work for long years and centuries. Years and centuries, of one knows not what complexion; — blessed or unblest, according as they shall, with earnest valiant effort, make progress therein, or, in slothful unveracity and dilettantism, only talk of making progress. For either progress therein, or swift and ever swifter progress towards dissolution, is henceforth a necessity.

It is of importance that this grand reformation were begun; that Corn-Law Debatings and other jargon, little less than delirious in such a time, had fled far away, and left us room to begin! For the evil has grown practical, extremely conspicuous; if it be not seen and provided for, the blindest fool will have to feel it ere long. There is much that can wait; but there is something also that cannot wait. With millions of eager Working Men imprisoned in "Impossibility" and Poor-Law Bastilles, it is time that some means of dealing with them were trying to become "possible"! Of the Government of England, of all articulate-speaking functionaries, real and imaginary Aristocracies, of me and of thee, it is imperatively demanded, "How do you mean to manage these men? Where are they to find a supportable existence? What is to become of them, — and of you!"

¹ The *Return of the Paupers for England and Wales* at Ladyday, 1842, is "Indoor, 221, 687, Out-door 1,207,402." Official Report. (Carlyle's note.)

JOHN STUART MILL (1806-1873)

John Stuart Mill was born in London, May 20, 1806. He was brought up by his father with strict regard to his intellectual training and the devotion of his powers to the service of humanity. When about twenty he passed through a spiritual crisis somewhat similar to that which Carlyle relates in *Sartor Resartus*. "Suppose," he asked himself, "that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant, would this be a great joy and happiness to you?" He found himself obliged to answer, No. He realized that his life had been too exclusively intellectual, with little attention to those things which appeal directly to the emotions, and prove themselves æsthetically valuable for their own sake. He tried to correct this deficiency by interest in music and poetry, especially the poetry of Wordsworth. In 1833 he met Carlyle, and for some years the two were intimate friends. They remained, however, far apart in philosophy. Mill was for most of his life an employee of the East India Company. His position gave him leisure to write and take part in public affairs. He was a member of Parliament, 1867-68. Thereafter he retired to Avignon, where he died in 1873.

Mill never outgrew the effects of his early severe intellectual training. He was always somewhat cold, austere, aloof, scrupulous in his relations with his fellow-men. His father was a leader among the Utilitarians, and the close friend of Jeremy Bentham, the modern founder of the school. The Utilitarians believed in the reform of society according to the principle of utility, which declares that individual and social conduct should be regulated to produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number. They developed much of the political philosophy characteristic of the liberal movement in the nineteenth century — individual freedom, democracy through representation, limitation of governmental interference which is often called the *laissez faire* doctrine, universal education, and free trade. All this treatment of human affairs in accordance with theory and reason was violently opposed by Carlyle and his followers, who believed rather in the working of laws of which man remains unconscious, or which are revealed only in flashes of insight or intuition. Mill succeeded his father, James Mill, as leader of the Utilitarian School. His writings cover the main lines of intellectual endeavor in the century, with the exception of natural science. His *System of Logic* was published in 1843, *Principles of Political Economy*, 1848, *On Liberty*, 1859, *Utilitarianism*, 1863, *Autobiography*, 1873.

ON LIBERTY

1859

Mill regarded *On Liberty* as the most individual of his works. It is in effect the textbook of the movement in the nineteenth century known as Liberalism. It shows the belief in the human intellect and its development by education, respect for the individual and distrust of government, which were the creed of the Liberals. Above all, it emphasizes freedom of discussion as indispensable to the working of democracy through a representative government. In this it follows closely in many points the arguments which Milton had urged in the *Areopagitica* two centuries before.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

The subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent

presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that, in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages; but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.

The struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar, particularly in that of Greece, Rome, and England. But in old times this contest was between subjects, or some classes of subjects, and the Government. By liberty was meant protection against the tyranny of the political rulers. The rulers were conceived (except in some of the popular governments of Greece) as in a necessarily antagonistic position to the people whom they ruled. They consisted of a governing One, or a governing tribe or caste, who derived their authority from inheritance or conquest, who, at all events, did not hold it at the pleasure of the governed, and whose supremacy men did not venture, perhaps did not desire, to contest, whatever precautions

might be taken against its oppressive exercise. Their power was regarded as necessary, but also as highly dangerous; as a weapon which they would attempt to use against their subjects, no less than against external enemies. To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures, it was needful that there should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying on the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defence against his beak and claws. The aim, therefore, of patriots was to set limits to the power which the ruler should be suffered to exercise over the community; and this limitation was what they meant by liberty. It was attempted in two ways. First, by obtaining a recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights, which it was to be regarded as a breach of duty in the ruler to infringe, and which if he did infringe, specific resistance, or general rebellion, was held to be justifiable. A second, and generally a later expedient, was the establishment of constitutional checks, by which the consent of the community, or of a body of some sort, supposed to represent its interests, was made a necessary condition to some of the more important acts of the governing power. To the first of these modes of limitation, the ruling power, in most European countries, was compelled, more or less, to submit. It was not so with the second; and, to attain this, or when already in some degree possessed, to attain it more completely, became everywhere the principal object of the lovers of liberty. And so long as mankind were content to combat one enemy by another, and to be ruled by a master, on condition of being guaranteed more or less efficaciously against his tyranny, they did not carry their aspirations beyond this point.

A time, however, came, in the progress of human affairs, when men ceased to think it a necessity of nature that their governors should be an independent power, opposed in interest to themselves. It appeared to them much better that the various magistrates of the State should be their tenants or delegates, revocable at their pleasure. In that way alone, it seemed, could they have complete security that the powers of government would never be abused to their disadvantage. By degrees this new demand for elective and

temporary rulers became the prominent object of the exertions of the popular party, wherever any such party existed; and superseded, to a considerable extent, the previous efforts to limit the power of rulers. As the struggle proceeded for making the ruling power emanate from the periodical choice of the ruled, some persons began to think that too much importance had been attached to the limitation of the power itself. *That* (it might seem) was a resource against rulers whose interests were habitually opposed to those of the people. What was now wanted was, that the rulers should be identified with the people; that their interest and will should be the interest and will of the nation. The nation did not need to be protected against its own will. There was no fear of its tyrannizing over itself. Let the rulers be effectually responsible to it, promptly removable by it, and it could afford to trust them with power of which it could itself dictate the use to be made. The power was but the nation's own power, concentrated, and in a form convenient for exercise. This mode of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, was common among the last generation of European liberalism, in the Continental section of which it still apparently predominates. Those who admit any limit to what a government may do, except in the case of such governments as they think ought not to exist, stand out as brilliant exceptions among the political thinkers of the Continent. A similar tone of sentiment might by this time have been prevalent in our own country, if the circumstances which for a time encouraged it, had continued unaltered.

But, in political and philosophical theories, as well as in persons, success discloses faults and infirmities which failure might have concealed from observation. The notion, that the people have no need to limit their power over themselves, might seem axiomatic, when popular government was a thing only dreamed about, or read of as having existed at some distant period of the past. Neither was that notion necessarily disturbed by such temporary aberrations as those of the French Revolution, the worst of which were the work of a usurping few, and which, in any case, belonged, not to the permanent working of popular institutions, but to a sudden and convulsive outbreak against monarchical and aristocratic despotism. In time, however, a democratic republic came to occupy a large portion of the earth's surface, and made itself felt as one of the most

powerful members of the community of nations; and elective and responsible government became subject to the observations and criticisms which wait upon a great existing fact. It was now perceived that such phrases as "self-government," and "the power of the people over themselves," do not express the true state of the case. The "people" who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised; and the "self-government" spoken of is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest. The will of the people, moreover, practically means the will of the most numerous or the most active *part* of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority; the people, consequently *may* desire to oppress a part of their number; and precautions are as much needed against this as against any other abuse of power. The limitation, therefore, of the power of government over individuals loses none of its importance when the holders of power are regularly accountable to the community, that is, to the strongest party therein. This view of things, recommending itself equally to the intelligence of thinkers and to the inclination of those important classes in European society to whose real or supposed interests democracy is adverse, has had no difficulty in establishing itself; and in political speculations "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard.

Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant—society collectively over the separate individuals who compose it—its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates; and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there needs protection

also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence: and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism.

The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind was warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

CHAPTER II

OF THE LIBERTY OF THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION

The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by,

when any defence would be necessary of the "liberty of the press" as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government. No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear. This aspect of the question, besides, has been so often and so triumphantly enforced by preceding writers, that it needs not be specially insisted on in this place. Though the law of England, on the subject of the press, is as servile to this day as it was in the time of the Tudors, there is little danger of its being actually put in force against political discussion, except during some temporary panic, when fear of insurrection drives ministers and judges from their propriety; and, speaking generally, it is not, in constitutional countries, to be apprehended, that the government, whether completely responsible to the people or not, will often attempt to control the expression of opinion except when in doing so it makes itself the organ of the general intolerance of the public. Let us suppose, therefore, that the government is entirely at one with the people, and never thinks of exerting any power of coercion unless in agreement with what it conceives to be their voice. But I deny the right of the people to exercise such coercion,

¹ These words had scarcely been written, when, as if to give them an emphatic contradiction, occurred the Government Press Prosecutions of 1858. That ill-judged interference with the liberty of public discussion has not, however, induced me to alter a single word in the text, nor has it at all weakened my conviction that, moments of panic excepted, the era of pains and penalties for political discussion has, in our own country, passed away. For, in the first place, the prosecutions were not persisted in; and, in the second, they were never, properly speaking, political prosecutions. The offence charged was not that of criticizing institutions, or the acts or persons of rulers, but of circulating what was deemed an immoral doctrine, the lawfulness of Tyrannicide.

If the arguments of the present chapter are of any validity, there ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing, as a matter of ethical conviction, any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered. It would, therefore, be irrelevant and out of place to examine here, whether the doctrine of Tyrannicide deserves that title. I shall content myself with saying that the subject has been at all times one of the open questions of morals; that the act of a private citizen in striking down a criminal, who, by raising himself above the law, has placed himself beyond the reach of legal punishment or control, has been accounted by whole nations, and by some of the best and wisest of men, not a crime, but an act of exalted virtue; and that, right or wrong, it is not of the nature of assassination, but of civil war. As such, I hold that the instigation to it, in a specific case, may be a proper subject of punishment, but only if an overt act has followed, and at least a probable connection can be established between the act and the instigation. Even then, it is not a foreign government, but the very government assailed, which alone, in the exercise of self-defence, can legitimately punish attacks directed against its own existence. (Mill's note.)

either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate. The best government has no more title to it than the worst. It is as noxious, or more noxious, when exerted in accordance with public opinion, than when in opposition to it. If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. Were an opinion a personal possession of no value except to the owner; if to be obstructed in the enjoyment of it were simply a private injury, it would make some difference whether the injury was inflicted only on a few persons or on many. But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth: if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.

It is necessary to consider separately these two hypotheses, each of which has a distinct branch of the argument corresponding to it. We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still.

³⁵ First: the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind, and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because they are sure that it is false, is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility. Its condemnation may be allowed to rest on this common argument, not the worse for being common.

⁵⁰ Unfortunately for the good sense of mankind, the fact of their fallibility is far from carrying the weight in their practical judgment which is always allowed to it in theory; for while every one well knows himself to be fallible, few think it necessary to take any precautions against their own fallibility, or admit the supposition that any opinion, of which they feel very certain, may be one of

the examples of the error to which they acknowledge themselves to be liable. Absolute princes, or others who are accustomed to unlimited deference, usually feel this complete confidence in their own opinions on nearly all subjects. People more happily situated, who sometimes hear their opinions disputed, and are not wholly unused to be set right when they are wrong, place the same unbounded reliance only on such of their opinions as are shared by all who surround them, or to whom they habitually defer; for in proportion to a man's want of confidence in his own solitary judgment, does he usually repose, with implicit trust, on the infallibility of "the world" in general. And the world, to each individual, means the part of it with which he comes in contact; his party, his sect, his church, his class of society; the man may be called, by comparison, almost liberal and large-minded to whom it means anything so comprehensive as his own country or his own age. Nor is his faith in this collective authority at all shaken by his being aware that other ages, countries, sects, churches, classes, and parties have thought, and even now think, the exact reverse. He devolves upon his own world the responsibility of being in the right against the dissentient worlds of other people; and it never troubles him that mere accident has decided which of these numerous worlds is the object of his reliance, and that the same causes which make him a Churchman in London, would have made him a Buddhist or a Confucian in Pekin. Yet it is as evident in itself, as any amount of argument can make it, that ages are no more infallible than individuals; every age having held many opinions which subsequent ages have deemed not only false but absurd; and it is as certain that many opinions now general will be rejected by future ages, as it is that many, once general, are rejected by the present.

The objection likely to be made to this argument would probably take some such form as the following. There is no greater assumption of infallibility in forbidding the propagation of error, than in any other thing which is done by public authority on its own judgment and responsibility. Judgment is given to men that they may use it. Because it may be used erroneously, are men to be told that they ought not to use it at all? To prohibit what they think pernicious, is not claiming exemption from error, but fulfilling the duty incumbent on them, although fallible, of acting on their conscientious con-

viction. If we were never to act on our opinions, because those opinions may be wrong, we should leave all our interests uncared for, and all our duties unperformed. An objection which applies to all conduct can be no valid objection to any conduct in particular. It is the duty of governments, and of individuals, to form the truest opinions they can; to form them carefully, and never impose them upon others unless they are quite sure of being right. But when they are sure (such reasoners may say), it is not conscientiousness but cowardice to shrink from acting on their opinions, and allow doctrines which they honestly think dangerous to the welfare of mankind, either in this life or in another, to be scattered abroad without restraint, because other people, in less enlightened times, have persecuted opinions now believed to be true. Let us take care, it may be said, not to make the same mistake: but governments and nations have made mistakes in other things, which are not denied to be fit subjects for the exercise of authority: they have laid on bad taxes, made unjust wars. Ought we therefore to lay on no taxes, and, under whatever provocation, make no wars? Men, and governments, must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must, assume our opinion to be true for the guidance of our own conduct: and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious.

I answer, that it is assuming very much more. There is the greatest difference between presuming an opinion to be true, because, with every opportunity for contesting it, it has not been refuted, and assuming its truth for the purpose of not permitting its refutation. Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right.

Let us now pass to the second division of the argument, and dismissing the supposition that any of the received opinions may be false, let us assume them to be true, and examine into the worth of the manner in which they are likely to be held, when their truth is not freely and openly canvassed. However unwillingly a person who has a strong opinion

may admit the possibility that his opinion may be false, he ought to be moved by the consideration that, however true it may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth.

There is a class of persons (happily not quite so numerous as formerly) who think it enough if a person assents undoubtingly to what they think true, though he has no knowledge whatever of the grounds of the opinion, and could not make a tenable defence of it against the most superficial objections. Such persons, if they can once get their creed taught from authority, naturally think that no good, and some harm, comes of its being allowed to be questioned. Where their influence prevails, they make it nearly impossible for the received opinion to be rejected wisely and considerately, though it may still be rejected rashly and ignorantly; for to shut out discussion entirely is seldom possible, and when it once gets in, beliefs not grounded on conviction are apt to give way before the slightest semblance of an argument. Waiving, however, this possibility — assuming that the true opinion abides in the mind, but abides as a prejudice, a belief independent of, and proof against, argument — this is not the way in which truth ought to be held by a rational being. This is not knowing the truth. Truth, thus held, is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth.

If the intellect and judgment of mankind ought to be cultivated, a thing which Protestants at least do not deny, on what can these faculties be more appropriately exercised by any one, than on the things which concern him so much that it is considered necessary for him to hold opinions on them? If the cultivation of the understanding consists in one thing more than in another, it is surely in learning the grounds of one's own opinions. Whatever people believe, on subjects on which it is of the first importance to believe rightly, they ought to be able to defend against at least the common objections. But, some one may say, "Let them be taught the grounds of their opinions. It does not follow that opinions must be merely parroted because they are never heard controverted. Persons who learn geometry do not simply commit the theorems to memory, but understand and learn likewise the demonstrations; and it would be absurd to say that they remain ignorant of the grounds of geometrical truths, because they never hear any one

deny, and attempt to disprove them." Undoubtedly: and such teaching suffices on a subject like mathematics, where there is nothing at all to be said on the wrong side of the question. The peculiarity of the evidence of mathematical truths is that all the argument is on one side. There are no objections, and no answers to objections. But on every subject on which difference of opinion is possible, the truth depends on a balance to be struck between two sets of conflicting reasons. Even in natural philosophy, there is always some other explanation possible of the same facts; some geocentric theory instead of heliocentric, some phlogiston instead of oxygen; and it has to be shown why that other theory cannot be the true one: and until this is shown, and until we know how it is shown, we do not understand the grounds of our opinion. But when we turn to subjects infinitely more complicated, to morals, religion, politics, social relations, and the business of life, three-fourths of the arguments for every disputed opinion consist in dispelling the appearances which favor some opinion different from it. The greatest orator, save one, of antiquity, has left it on record that he always studied his adversary's case with as great, if not still greater, intensity than even his own. What Cicero practised as the means of forensic success requires to be imitated by all who study any subject in order to arrive at the truth. He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that. His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on the opposite side; if he does not so much as know what they are, he has no ground for preferring either opinion. The rational position for him would be suspension of judgment, and unless he contents himself with that, he is either led by authority, or adopts, like the generality of the world, the side to which he feels most inclination. Nor is it enough that he should hear the arguments of adversaries from his own teachers, presented as they state them, and accompanied by what they offer as refutations. That is not the way to do justice to the arguments, or bring them into real contact with his own mind. He must be able to hear them from persons who actually believe them; who defend them in earnest, and do their very utmost for them. He must know them in their most plausible and persuasive form; he must feel the whole force of the difficulty which the true view of the subject has to encounter and dispose of;

else he will never really possess himself of the portion of truth which meets and removes that difficulty. Ninety-nine in a hundred of what are called educated men are in this condition; even of those who can argue fluently for their opinions. Their conclusion may be true, but it might be false for anything they know: they have never thrown themselves into the mental position of those who think differently from them, and considered what such persons may have to say; and consequently they do not, in any proper sense of the word, know the doctrine which they themselves profess. They do not know those parts of it which explain and justify the remainder; the considerations which show that a fact which seemingly conflicts with another is reconcilable with it, or that, of two apparently strong reasons, one and not the other ought to be preferred. All that part of the truth which turns the scale, and decides the judgment of a completely informed mind, they are strangers to; nor is it ever really known, but to those who have attended equally and impartially to both sides, and endeavored to see the reasons of both in the strongest light. So essential is this discipline to a real understanding of moral and human subjects, that if opponents of all important truths do not exist, it is indispensable to imagine them, and supply them with the strongest arguments which the most skilful devil's advocate can conjure up.

If, however, the mischievous operation of the absence of free discussion, when the received opinions are true, were confined to leaving men ignorant of the grounds of those opinions, it might be thought that this, if an intellectual, is no moral evil, and does not affect the worth of the opinions, regarded in their influence on the character. The fact, however, is, that not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate. Instead of a vivid conception and a living belief, there remain only a few phrases retained by rote; or, if any part, the shell and husk only of the meaning is retained, the finer essence being lost. The great chapter in human history which this fact occupies and fills, cannot be too earnestly studied and meditated on.

It is illustrated in the experience of almost all ethical doctrines and religious creeds.

They are all full of meaning and vitality to those who originate them, and to the direct disciples of the originators. Their meaning continues to be felt in undiminished strength, and is perhaps brought out into even fuller consciousness, so long as the struggle lasts to give the doctrine or creed an ascendancy over other creeds. At last it either prevails, and becomes the general opinion, or its progress stops; it keeps possession of the ground it has gained, but ceases to spread further. When either of these results has become apparent, controversy on the subject flags, and gradually dies away. The doctrine has taken its place, if not as a received opinion, as one of the admitted sects or divisions of opinion: those who hold it have generally inherited, not adopted it; and conversion from one of these doctrines to another, being now an exceptional fact, occupies little place in the thoughts of their professors. Instead of being, as at first, constantly on the alert either to defend themselves against the world, or to bring the world over to them, they have subsided into acquiescence, and neither listen, when they can help it, to arguments against their creed, nor trouble dissentients (if there be such) with arguments in its favor. From this time may usually be dated the decline in the living power of the doctrine. We often hear the teachers of all creeds lamenting the difficulty of keeping up in the minds of believers a lively apprehension of the truth which they nominally recognize, so that it may penetrate the feelings, and acquire a real mastery over the conduct. No such difficulty is complained of while the creed is still fighting for its existence: even the weaker combatants then know and feel what they are fighting for, and the difference between it and other doctrines; and in that period of every creed's existence, not a few persons may be found, who have realized its fundamental principles in all the forms of thought, have weighed and considered them in all their important bearings, and have experienced the full effect on the character which belief in that creed ought to produce in a mind thoroughly imbued with it. But when it has come to be an hereditary creed, and to be received passively, not actively — when the mind is no longer compelled, in the same degree as at first, to exercise its vital powers on the questions which its belief presents to it, there is a progressive tendency to forget all of the belief except the formularies, or to give it a dull and torpid assent, as if accepting it on trust dispensed

with the necessity of realizing it in consciousness, or testing it by personal experience, until it almost ceases to connect itself at all with the inner life of the human being. Then are seen the cases, so frequent in this age of the world as almost to form the majority, in which the creed remains as it were outside the mind, incrusting and petrifying it against all other influences addressed to the higher parts of our nature; manifesting its power by not suffering any fresh and living conviction to get in, but itself doing nothing for the mind or heart, except standing sentinel over them to keep them vacant.

It still remains to speak of one of the principal causes which make diversity of opinion advantageous, and will continue to do so until mankind shall have entered a stage of intellectual advancement which at present seems at an incalculable distance. We have hitherto considered only two possibilities: that the received opinion may be false, and some other opinion, consequently, true; or that, the received opinion being true, a conflict with the opposite error is essential to a clear apprehension and deep feeling of its truth. But there is a commoner case than either of these; when the conflicting doctrines, instead of being one true and the other false, share the truth between them; and the nonconforming opinion is needed to supply the remainder of the truth, of which the received doctrine embodies only a part. Popular opinions, on subjects not palpable to sense, are often true, but seldom or never the whole truth. They are a part of the truth; sometimes a greater, sometimes a smaller part, but exaggerated, distorted, and disjointed from the truths by which they ought to be accompanied and limited. Heretical opinions, on the other hand, are generally some of these suppressed and neglected truths, bursting the bonds which kept them down, and either seeking reconciliation with the truth contained in the common opinion, or fronting it as enemies, and setting themselves up, with similar exclusiveness, as the whole truth. The latter case is hitherto the most frequent, as, in the human mind, one-sidedness has always been the rule, and many-sidedness the exception. Hence, even in revolutions of opinion, one part of the truth usually sets while another rises. Even progress, which ought to superadd, for the most part only substitutes, one partial and incomplete truth for another; improvement consisting chiefly in this, that the

new fragment of truth is more wanted, more adapted to the needs of the time, than that which it displaces. Such being the partial character of prevailing opinions, even when resting on a true foundation, every opinion which embodies somewhat of the portion of truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious, with whatever amount of error and confusion that truth may be blended. No sober judge of human affairs will feel bound to be indignant because those who force on our notice truths which we should otherwise have overlooked, overlook some of those which we see. Rather, he will think that so long as popular truth is one-sided, it is more desirable than otherwise that unpopular truth should have one-sided assertors too; such being usually the most energetic, and the most likely to compel reluctant attention to the fragment of wisdom which they proclaim as if it were the whole.

Thus, in the eighteenth century, when nearly all the instructed, and all those of the uninstructed who were led by them, were lost in admiration of what is called civilization, and of the marvels of modern science, literature, and philosophy, and while greatly overrating the amount of unlikeness between the men of modern and those of ancient times, indulged the belief that the whole of the difference was in their own favor; with what a salutary shock did the paradoxes of Rousseau explode like bombshells in the midst, dislocating the compact mass of one-sided opinion, and forcing its elements to recombine in a better form and with additional ingredients. Not that the current opinions were on the whole farther from the truth than Rousseau's were; on the contrary, they were nearer to it; they contained more of positive truth, and very much less of error. Nevertheless there lay in Rousseau's doctrine, and has floated down the stream of opinion along with it, a considerable amount of exactly those truths which the popular opinion wanted; and these are the deposit which was left behind when the flood subsided. The superior worth of simplicity of life, the enervating and demoralizing effect of the trammels and hypocrisies of artificial society, are ideas which have never been entirely absent from cultivated minds since Rousseau wrote; and they will in time produce their due effect, though at present needing to be asserted as much as ever, and to be asserted by deeds, for words, on this subject, have nearly exhausted their power.

In politics, again, it is almost a commonplace, that a party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life; until the one or the other shall have so enlarged its mental grasp as to be a party equally of order and of progress, knowing and distinguishing what is fit to be preserved from what ought to be swept away. Each of these modes of thinking derives its utility from the deficiencies of the other; but it is in a great measure the opposition of the other that keeps each within the limits of reason and sanity. Unless opinions favorable to democracy and to aristocracy, to property and to equality, to co-operation and to competition, to luxury and to abstinence, to sociality and individuality, to liberty and discipline, and all the other standing antagonisms of practical life, are expressed with equal freedom, and enforced and defended with equal talent and energy, there is no chance of both elements obtaining their due; one scale is sure to go up, and the other down. Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness, and it has to be made by the rough process of a struggle between combatants fighting under hostile banners. On any of the great open questions just enumerated, if either of the two opinions has a better claim than the other, not merely to be tolerated, but to be encouraged and countenanced, it is the one which happens at the particular time and place to be in a minority. That is the opinion which, for the time being, represents the neglected interests, the side of human well-being which is in danger of obtaining less than its share. I am aware that there is not, in this country, any intolerance of differences of opinion on most of these topics. They are adduced to show, by admitted and multiplied examples, the universality of the fact, that only through diversity of opinion is there, in the existing state of human intellect, a chance of fair play to all sides of the truth. When there are persons to be found who form an exception to the apparent unanimity of the world on any subject, even if the world is in the right, it is always probable that dissentients have something worth hearing to say for themselves, and that truth would lose something by their silence.

Before quitting the subject of freedom of opinion, it is fit to take some notice of those who say that the free expression of all opinions should be permitted, on condition that the manner be temperate, and do not pass the bounds of fair discussion. Much might be said on the impossibility of fixing where these supposed bounds are to be placed; for if the test be offence to those whose opinions are attacked, I think experience testifies that this offence is given whenever the attack is telling and powerful, and that every opponent who pushes them hard, and whom they find it difficult to answer, appears to them, if he shows any strong feeling on the subject, an intemperate opponent. But this, though an important consideration in a practical point of view, merges in a more fundamental objection. Undoubtedly the manner of asserting an opinion, even though it be a true one, may be very objectionable, and may justly incur severe censure. But the principal offences of the kind are such as it is mostly impossible, unless by accidental self-betrayal, to bring home to conviction. The gravest of them is, to argue sophistically, to suppress facts or arguments, to misstate the elements of the case, or misrepresent the opposite opinion. But all this, even to the most aggravated degree, is so continually done in perfect good faith, by persons who are not considered, and in many other respects may not deserve to be considered, ignorant or incompetent, that it is rarely possible, on adequate grounds, conscientiously to stamp the misrepresentation as morally culpable; and still less could law presume to interfere with this kind of controversial misconduct. With regard to what is commonly meant by intemperate discussion, namely invective, sarcasm, personality, and the like, the denunciation of these weapons would deserve more sympathy if it were ever proposed to interdict them equally to both sides; but it is only desired to restrain the employment of them against the prevailing opinion: against the unprevailing they may not only be used without general disapproval, but will be likely to obtain for him who uses them the praise of honest zeal and righteous indignation. Yet whatever mischief arises from their use is greatest when they are employed against the comparatively defenceless; and whatever unfair advantage can be derived by any opinion from this mode of asserting it, accrues almost exclusively to received opinions. The worst offence of this kind which can be committed by a polemic is to stig-

matize those who hold the contrary opinion as bad and immoral men. To calumny of this sort, those who hold any unpopular opinion are peculiarly exposed, because they are in general few and uninfluential, and nobody but themselves feels much interested in seeing justice done them; but this weapon is, from the nature of the case, denied to those who attack a prevailing opinion: they can neither use it with safety to themselves, nor, if they could, would it do anything but recoil on their own cause. In general, opinions contrary to those commonly received can only obtain a hearing by studied moderation of language, and the most cautious avoidance of unnecessary offense, from which they hardly ever deviate even in a slight degree without losing ground: while unmeasured vituperation employed on the side of the prevailing opinion really does deter people from professing contrary opinions, and from listening to those who profess them. For the interest, therefore, of truth and justice, it is far more important to restrain this employment of vituperative language than the other; and, for example, if it were necessary to choose, there would be much more need to discourage offensive attacks on infidelity than on religion. It is, however, obvious that law and authority have no business with restraining either, while opinion ought, in every instance, to determine its verdict by the circumstances of the individual case; condemning every one, on whichever side of the argument he places himself, in whose mode of advocacy either want of candor, or malignity, bigotry, or intolerance of feeling manifest themselves; but not inferring these vices from the side which a person takes, though it be the contrary side of the question to our own; and giving merited honor to every one, whatever opinion he may hold, who has calmness to see and honesty to state what his opponents and their opinions really are, exaggerating nothing to their discredit, keeping nothing back which tells, or can be supposed to tell, in their favor. This is the real morality of public discussion: and if often violated, I am happy to think that there are many controversialists who to a great extent observe it, and a still greater number who conscientiously strive towards it.

CHAPTER III

OF INDIVIDUALITY, AS ONE OF THE ELEMENTS OF WELL-BEING

Such being the reasons which make it imperative that human beings should be free to form opinions, and to express their opinions without reserve; and such the baneful consequences to the intellectual, and through that to the moral nature of man, unless this liberty is either conceded, or asserted in spite of prohibition; let us next examine whether the same reasons do not require that men should be free to act upon their opinions — to carry these out in their lives, without hindrance, either physical or moral, from their fellow-men, so long as it is at their own risk and peril. This last proviso is of course indispensable. No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act. An opinion that corn-dealers are starvers of the poor, or that private property is robbery, ought to be unmolested when simply circulated through the press, but may justly incur punishment when delivered orally to an excited mob assembled before the house of a corn-dealer, or when handed about among the same mob in the form of a placard. Acts, of whatever kind, which, without justifiable cause, do harm to others, may be, and in the more important cases absolutely require to be, controlled by the unfavorable sentiments, and, when needful, by the active interference of mankind. The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited: he must not make himself a nuisance to other people. But if he refrains from molesting others in what concerns them, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free, prove also that he should be allowed, without molestation, to carry his opinions into practice at his own cost. That mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good, until mankind are much more capable than at present of recognizing all sides of the truth, are principles applicable to men's modes of action, not less than to their opin-

ions. As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character, short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try them. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.

In maintaining this principle, the greatest difficulty to be encountered does not lie in the appreciation of means towards an acknowledged end, but in the indifference of persons in general to the end itself. If it were felt that the free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being; that it is not only a co-ordinate element with all that is designated by the terms civilization, instruction, education, culture, but is itself a necessary part and condition of all those things; there would be no danger that liberty should be undervalued and the adjustment of the boundaries between it and social control would present no extraordinary difficulty. But the evil is, that individual spontaneity is hardly recognized by the common modes of thinking as having any intrinsic worth, or deserving any regard on its own account. The majority, being satisfied with the ways of mankind as they now are (for it is they who make them what they are), cannot comprehend why those ways should not be good enough for everybody; and what is more, spontaneity forms no part of the ideal of the majority of moral and social reformers, but is rather looked on with jealousy, as a troublesome and perhaps rebellious obstruction to the general acceptance of what these reformers, in their own judgment, think would be best for mankind. Few persons, out of Germany, even comprehend the meaning of the doctrine which Wilhelm von Humboldt, so eminent both as a *savant* and as a politician, made the text of a treatise—that “the end of man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal or immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and

consistent whole;” that, therefore, the object “towards which every human being must ceaselessly direct his efforts, and on which especially those who design to influence their fellow-men must ever keep their eyes, is the individuality of power and development;” that for this there are two requisites, “freedom, and variety of situations;” and that from the union of these arise “individual vigor and manifold diversity” which combine themselves in “originality.”¹

Little, however, as people are accustomed to a doctrine like that of Von Humboldt, and surprising as it may be to them to find so high a value attached to individuality, the question, one must nevertheless think, can only be one of degree. No one's idea of excellence in conduct is that people should do absolutely nothing but copy one another. No one would assert that people ought not to put into their mode of life, and into the conduct of their concerns, any impress whatever of their own judgment, or of their own individual character. On the other hand, it would be absurd to pretend that people ought to live as if nothing whatever had been known in the world before they came into it; as if experience had as yet done nothing towards showing that one mode of existence, or of conduct, is preferable to another. Nobody denies that people should be so taught and trained in youth as to know and benefit by the ascertained results of human experience. But it is the privilege and proper condition of a human being, arrived at the maturity of his faculties, to use and interpret experience in his own way. It is for him to find out what part of recorded experience is properly applicable to his own circumstances and character. The traditions and customs of other people are, to a certain extent, evidence of what their experience has taught *them*; presumptive evidence, and as such, have a claim to his deference: but, in the first place, their experience may be too narrow; or they may not have interpreted it rightly. Secondly, their interpretation of experience may be correct, but unsuitable to him. Customs are made for customary circumstances and customary characters; and his circumstances or his character may be uncustomary. Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs, and suitable to him, yet to conform to custom, merely *as* custom, does not educate or

¹ *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, from the German of Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, pp. 11–13. (Mill's note.)

develop in him any of the qualities which are the distinctive endowment of a human being. The human faculties of perception, judgment, discriminative feeling, mental activity, and even moral preference, are exercised only in making a choice. He who does anything because it is the custom makes no choice. He gains no practice either in discerning or in desiring what is best. The mental and moral, like the muscular powers, are improved only by being used. The faculties are called into no exercise by doing a thing merely because others do it, no more than by believing a thing only because others believe it. If the grounds of an opinion are not conclusive to the person's own reason, his reason cannot be strengthened, but is likely to be weakened, by his adopting it; and if the inducements to an act are not such as are consentaneous to his own feelings and character (where affection, or the rights of others, are not concerned) it is so much done towards rendering his feelings and character inert and torpid, instead of active and energetic.

He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness of self-control to hold to his deliberate decision. And these qualities he requires and exercises exactly in proportion as the part of his conduct which he determines according to his own judgment and feelings is a large one. It is possible that he might be guided in some good path, and kept out of harm's way, without any of these things. But what will be his comparative worth as a human being? It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it. Among the works of man, which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in importance surely is man himself. Supposing it were possible to get houses built, corn grown, battles fought, causes tried, and even churches erected and prayers said, by machinery — by automatons in human form — it would be a considerable loss to exchange for these automatons even the men and women who at present inhabit the more civilized parts of the world, and who assuredly are but starved specimens of what nature

can and will produce. Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.

It will probably be conceded that it is desirable people should exercise their understandings, and that an intelligent following of custom, or even occasionally an intelligent deviation from custom, is better than a blind and simply mechanical adhesion to it. To a certain extent it is admitted that our understanding should be our own; but there is not the same willingness to admit that our desires and impulses should be our own likewise; or that to possess impulses of our own, and of any strength, is anything but a peril and a snare. Yet desires and impulses are as much a part of a perfect human being as beliefs and restraints: and strong impulses are only perilous when not properly balanced; when one set of aims and inclinations is developed into strength, while others, which ought to co-exist with them, remain weak and inactive. It is not because men's desires are strong that they act ill; it is because their consciences are weak. There is no natural connection between strong impulses and a weak conscience. The natural connection is the other way. To say that one person's desires and feelings are stronger and more various than those of another, is merely to say that he has more of the raw material of human nature, and is therefore capable, perhaps of more evil, but certainly of more good. Strong impulses are but another name for energy. Energy may be turned to bad uses; but more good may always be made of an energetic nature, than of an indolent and impassive one. Those who have most natural feeling are always those whose cultivated feelings may be made the strongest. The same strong susceptibilities which make the personal impulses vivid and powerful, are also the source from whence are generated the most passionate love of virtue, and the sternest self-control. It is through the cultivation of these that society both does its duty and protects its interests; not by rejecting the stuff of which heroes are made, because it knows not how to make them. A person whose desires and impulses are his own — are the expression of his own nature, as it has been developed and modified by his own culture — is said to have a character. One whose desires and im-

pulses are not his own, has no character, no more than a steam-engine has a character. If, in addition to being his own, his impulses are strong, and are under the government of a strong will, he has an energetic character. Whoever thinks that individuality of desires and impulses should not be encouraged to unfold itself, must maintain that society has no need of strong natures — is not the better for containing many persons who have much character — and that a high general average of energy is not desirable.

In some early states of society, these forces might be, and were, too much ahead of the power which society then possessed of disciplining and controlling them. There has been a time when the element of spontaneity and individuality was in excess, and the social principle had a hard struggle with it. The difficulty then was to induce men of strong bodies or minds to pay obedience to any rules which required them to control their impulses. To overcome this difficulty, law and discipline, like the Popes struggling against the Emperors, asserted a power over the whole man, claiming to control all his life in order to control his character — which society had not found any other sufficient means of binding. But society has now fairly got the better of individuality; and the danger which threatens human nature is not the excess, but the deficiency, of personal impulses and preferences. Things are vastly changed since the passions of those who were strong by station or by personal endowment were in a state of habitual rebellion against laws and ordinances, and required to be rigorously chained up to enable the persons within their reach to enjoy any particle of security. In our times, from the highest class of society down to the lowest, every one lives as under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship. Not only in what concerns others, but in what concerns only themselves, the individual or the family do not ask themselves — what do I prefer? or, what would suit my character and disposition? or, what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair play, and enable it to grow and thrive? They ask themselves, what is suitable to my position? what is usually done by persons of my station and pecuniary circumstances? or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station and circumstances superior to mine? I do not mean that they choose what is customary in preference to what suits their own inclination. It does not occur to them to have any inclination, except

for what is customary. Thus the mind itself is bowed to the yoke; even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of; they like in crowds; they exercise choice only among things commonly done: peculiarity of taste, eccentricity of conduct, are shunned equally with crimes: until by dint of not following their own nature they have no nature to follow: their human capacities are withered and starved: they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home growth, or properly their own. Now is this, or is it not, the desirable condition of human nature?

It is so, on the Calvinistic theory. According to that, the one great offence of man is self-will. All the good of which humanity is capable is comprised in obedience. You have no choice; thus you must do, and no otherwise: "whatever is not a duty, is a sin." Human nature being radically corrupt, there is no redemption for any one until human nature is killed within him. To one holding this theory of life, crushing out any of the human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities, is no evil: man needs no capacity, but that of surrendering himself to the will of God: and if he uses any of his faculties for any other purpose but to do that supposed will more effectually, he is better without them. This is the theory of Calvinism; and it is held, in a mitigated form, by many who do not consider themselves Calvinists; the mitigation consisting in giving a less ascetic interpretation to the alleged will of God; asserting it to be his will that mankind should gratify some of their inclinations; of course not in the manner they themselves prefer, but in the way of obedience, that is, in a way prescribed to them by authority; and, therefore, by the necessary condition of the case, the same for all.

In some such insidious form there is at present a strong tendency to this narrow theory of life, and to the pinched and hidebound type of human character which it patronizes. Many persons, no doubt, sincerely think that human beings thus cramped and dwarfed are as their Maker designed them to be; just as many have thought that trees are a much finer thing when clipped into pollards, or cut out into figures of animals, than as nature made them. But if it be any part of religion to believe that man was made by a good Being, it is more consistent with that faith to believe that this Being gave all human faculties that they might be culti-

vated and unfolded, not rooted out and consumed, and that he takes delight in every nearer approach made by his creatures to the ideal conception embodied in them, every increase in any of their capabilities of comprehension, of action, or of enjoyment. There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic: a conception of humanity as having its nature bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. "Pagan self-assertion" is one of the elements of human worth, as well as "Christian self-denial."¹ There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox.

It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it, and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation; and as the works partake the character of those who do them, by the same process human life also becomes rich, diversified, and animating, furnishing more abundant aliment to high thoughts and elevating feelings, and strengthening the tie which binds every individual to the race, by making the race infinitely better worth belonging to. In proportion to the development of his individuality, each person becomes more valuable to himself, and is therefore capable of being more valuable to others. There is a greater fullness of life about his own existence, and when there is more life in the units there is more in the mass which is composed of them. As much compression as is necessary to prevent the stronger specimens of human nature from encroaching on the rights of others cannot be dispensed with; but for this there is ample compensation even in the point of view of human development. The means of development which the individual loses by being prevented from gratifying his inclinations to the injury of others, are chiefly obtained at the expense of the development of other people. And even to himself there is a full equivalent in the better development of the social part of his nature, rendered possible by the restraint put upon the selfish part. To be held to rigid rules of justice for

the sake of others, develops the feelings and capacities which have the good of others for their object. But to be restrained in things not affecting their good, by their mere displeasure, develops nothing valuable, except such force of character as may unfold itself in resisting the restraint. If acquiesced in, it dulls and blunts the whole nature. To give any fair play to the nature of each, it is essential that different persons should be allowed to lead different lives. In proportion as this latitude has been exercised in any age, has that age been noteworthy to posterity. Even despotism does not produce its worst effects, so long as individuality exists under it; and whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called, and whether it professes to be enforcing the will of God or the injunctions of men.

Having said that the individuality is the same thing with development, and that it is only the cultivation of individuality which produces, or can produce, well-developed human beings, I might here close the argument: for what more or better can be said of any condition of human affairs than that it brings human beings themselves nearer to the best thing they can be? or what worse can be said of any obstruction to good than that it prevents this? Doubtless, however, these considerations will not suffice to convince those who most need convincing; and it is necessary further to show, that these developed human beings are of some use to the undeveloped — to point out to those who do not desire liberty, and would not avail themselves of it, that they may be in some intelligible manner rewarded for allowing other people to make use of it without hindrance.

In the first place, then, I would suggest that they might possibly learn something from them. It will not be denied by anybody, that originality is a valuable element in human affairs. There is always need of persons not only to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are true no longer, but also to commence new practices, and set the example of more enlightened conduct, and better taste and sense in human life. This cannot well be gainsaid by anybody who does not believe that the world has already attained perfection in all its ways and practices. It is true that this benefit is not capable of being rendered by everybody alike: there are but few persons, in comparison with the whole of mankind, whose experiments, if adopted by others,

¹ Sterling's *Essays*. (Mill's note.)

would be likely to be any improvement on established practice. But these few are the salt of the earth; without them, human life would become a stagnant pool. Not only is it they who introduce good things which did not before exist; it is they who keep the life in those which already exist. If there were nothing new to be done, would human intellect cease to be necessary? Would it be a reason why those who do the old things should forget why they are done, and do them like cattle, not like human beings? There is only too great a tendency in the best beliefs and practices to degenerate into the mechanical; and unless there were a succession of persons whose ever-recurring originality prevents the grounds of those beliefs and practices from becoming merely traditional, such dead matter would not resist the smallest shock from anything really alive, and there would be no reason why civilization should not die out, as in the Byzantine Empire. Persons of genius, it is true, are, and are always likely to be, a small minority; but in order to have them, it is necessary to preserve the soil in which they grow. Genius can only breathe freely in an atmosphere of freedom. Persons of genius are, *ex vi termini*,¹ more individual than any other people — less capable, consequently, of fitting themselves, without hurtful compression, into any of the small number of molds which society provides in order to save its members the trouble of forming their own character. If from timidity they consent to be forced into one of these molds, and to let all that part of themselves which cannot expand under the pressure remain unexpanded, society will be little the better for their genius. If they are of a strong character, and break their fetters, they become a mark for the society which has not succeeded in reducing them to commonplace, to point out with solemn warning as “wild,” “erratic,” and the like; much as if one should complain of the Niagara river for not flowing smoothly between its banks like a Dutch canal.

I insist thus emphatically on the importance of genius, and the necessity of allowing it to unfold itself freely both in thought and in practice, being well aware that no one will deny the position in theory, but knowing also that almost every one, in reality, is totally indifferent to it. People think genius a fine thing if it enables a man to write an exciting poem, or paint a picture. But in its true sense, that of originality in thought

and action, though no one says that it is not a thing to be admired, nearly all, at heart, think that they can do very well without it. Unhappily this is too natural to be wondered at. Originality is the one thing which unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of. They cannot see what it is to do for them: how should they? If they could see what it would do for them, it would not be originality. The first service which originality has to render them, is that of opening their eyes: which being once fully done, they would have a chance of being themselves original. Meanwhile, recollecting that nothing was ever yet done which some one was not the first to do, and that all good things which exist are the fruits of originality, let them be modest enough to believe that there is something still left for it to accomplish, and assure themselves that they are more in need of originality, the less they are conscious of the want.

In sober truth, whatever homage may be professed, or even paid, to real or supposed mental superiority, the general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind. In ancient history, in the Middle Ages, and in a diminishing degree through the long transition from feudality to the present time, the individual was a power in himself; and if he had either great talents or a high social position, he was a considerable power. At present individuals are lost in the crowd. In politics it is almost a triviality to say that public opinion now rules the world. The only power deserving the name is that of masses, and of governments while they make themselves the organ of the tendencies and instincts of masses. This is as true in the moral and social relations of private life as in public transactions. Those whose opinions go by the name of public opinion are not always the same sort of public: in America they are the whole white population; in England, chiefly the middle class. But they are always a mass, that is to say, collective mediocrity. And what is a still greater novelty, the mass do not now take their opinions from dignitaries in Church or State, from ostensible leaders, or from books. Their thinking is done for them by men much like themselves, addressing them or speaking in their name, on the spur of the moment, through the newspapers. I am not complaining of all this. I do not assert that anything better is compatible, as a general rule, with the present low state of the human

¹ by definition.

mind. But that does not hinder the government of mediocrity from being mediocre government. No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity, except in so far as the sovereign. Many have let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few. The initiation of all wise or noble things comes and must come from individuals; generally at first from some one individual. The honor and glory of the average man is that he is capable of following that initiative; that he can respond internally to wise and noble things, and be led to them with his eyes open. I am not countenancing the sort of "hero-worship" which applauds the strong man of genius for forcibly seizing on the government of the world and making it do his bidding in spite of itself. All he can claim is, freedom to point out the way. The power of compelling others into it is not only inconsistent with the freedom and development of all the rest, but corrupting to the strong man himself. It does seem, however, that when the opinions of masses of merely average men are everywhere become or becoming the dominant power, the counterpoise and corrective to that tendency would be the more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought. It is in these circumstances most especially, that exceptional individuals, instead of being deterred, should be encouraged in acting differently from the mass. In other times there was no advantage in their doing so, unless they acted not only differently but better. In this age, the mere example of non-conformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service. Precisely because the tyranny of opinion is such as to make eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny, that people should be eccentric. Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigor, and moral courage it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE LIMITS TO THE AUTHORITY OF SOCIETY
OVER THE INDIVIDUAL

5 What, then, is the rightful limit to the sovereignty of the individual over himself? Where does the authority of society begin? How much of human life should be assigned to individuality, and how much to society?

10 Each will receive its proper share, if each has that which more particularly concerns it. To individuality should belong the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which
15 chiefly interests society.

Though society is not founded on a contract, and though no good purpose is answered by inventing a contract in order to deduce social obligations from it, every one who receives the protection of society owes a return for the benefit, and the fact of living in society renders it indispensable that each should be bound to observe a certain line of conduct towards the rest. This conduct consists, first, in not injuring the interests of one another; or rather certain interests, which, either by express legal provision or by tacit understanding, ought to be considered as rights; and secondly, in each person's bearing his share (to be fixed on some equitable principle) of the labors and sacrifices incurred for defending the society or its members from injury and molestation. These conditions society is justified in enforcing, at all costs to those who endeavor to withhold fulfillment. Nor is this all that society may do. The acts of an individual may be hurtful to others, or wanting in due consideration for their welfare, without going to the length of violating any of their constituted rights. The offender may then be justly punished by opinion, though not by law. As soon as any part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it, and the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion. But there is no room for entertaining any such question when a person's conduct affects the interests of no persons besides himself, or needs not affect them unless they like (all the persons concerned being of full age, and the ordinary amount of understanding). In all such cases, there
55 should be perfect freedom, legal and social, to do the action and stand the consequences.

The distinction between the loss of con-

sideration which a person may rightly incur by defect of prudence or of personal dignity, and the reprobation which is due to him for an offence against the rights of others, is not a merely nominal distinction. It makes a vast difference both in our feelings and in our conduct towards him whether he displeases us in things in which we think we have a right to control him, or in things in which we know that we have not. If he displeases us, we may express our distaste, and we may stand aloof from a person as well as from a thing that displeases us; but we shall not therefore feel called on to make his life uncomfortable. We shall reflect that he already bears, or will bear, the whole penalty of his error; if he spoils his life by mismanagement, we shall not, for that reason, desire to spoil it still further: instead of wishing to punish him, we shall rather endeavor to alleviate his punishment, by showing him how he may avoid or cure the evils his conduct tends to bring upon him. He may be to us an object of pity, perhaps of dislike, but not of anger or resentment; we shall not treat him like an enemy of society: the worst we shall think ourselves justified in doing is leaving him to himself, if we do not interfere benevolently by showing interest or concern for him. It is far otherwise if he has infringed the rules necessary for the protection of his fellow-creatures, individually or collectively. The evil consequences of his acts do not then fall on himself, but on others; and society, as the protector of all its members, must retaliate on him; must inflict pain on him for the express purpose of punishment, and must take care that it be sufficiently severe. In the one case, he is an offender at our bar, and we are called on not only to sit in judgment on him, but, in one shape or another, to execute our own sentence: in the other case, it is not our part to inflict any suffering on him, except what may incidentally follow from our using the same liberty in the regulation of our own affairs, which we allow to him in his.

The distinction here pointed out between the part of a person's life which concerns only himself, and that which concerns others, many persons will refuse to admit. How (it may be asked) can any part of the conduct of a member of society be a matter of indifference to the other members? No person is an entirely isolated being; it is impossible for a person to do anything seriously or permanently hurtful to himself, without mischief reaching at least to his near connections, and often far beyond them. If he injures his

property, he does harm to those who directly or indirectly derived support from it, and usually diminishes, by a greater or less amount, the general resources of the community. If he deteriorates his bodily or mental faculties, he not only brings evil upon all who depended on him for any portion of their happiness, but disqualifies himself for rendering the services which he owes to his fellow-creatures generally; perhaps becomes a burden on their affection or benevolence; and if such conduct were very frequent, hardly any offence that is committed would detract more from the general sum of good. Finally, if by his vices or follies a person does no direct harm to others, he is nevertheless (it may be said) injurious by his example; and ought to be compelled to control himself, for the sake of those whom the sight or knowledge of his conduct might corrupt or mislead.

And even (it will be added) if the consequences of misconduct could be confined to the vicious or thoughtless individual, ought society to abandon to their own guidance those who are manifestly unfit for it? If protection against themselves is confessedly due to children and persons under age, is not society equally bound to afford it to persons of mature years who are equally incapable of self-government? If gambling, or drunkenness, or incontinence, or idleness, or uncleanness, are as injurious to happiness, and as great a hindrance to improvement, as many or most of the acts prohibited by law, why (it may be asked) should not law, so far as is consistent with practicability and social convenience, endeavor to repress these also? And as a supplement to the unavoidable imperfections of law, ought not opinion at least to organize a powerful police against these vices, and visit rigidly with social penalties those who are known to practice them? There is no question here (it may be said) about restricting individuality, or impeding the trial of new and original experiments in living. The only things it is sought to prevent are things which have been tried and condemned from the beginning of the world until now; things which experience has shown not to be useful or suitable to any person's individuality. There must be some length of time and amount of experience after which a moral or prudential truth may be regarded as established: and it is merely desired to prevent generation after generation from falling over the same precipice which has been fatal to their predecessors.

I fully admit that the mischief which a person does to himself may seriously affect, both through their sympathies and their interests, those nearly connected with him and, in a minor degree, society at large. When, by conduct of this sort, a person is led to violate a distinct and assignable obligation to any other person or persons, the case is taken out of the self-regarding class, and becomes amenable to moral disapprobation in the proper sense of the term. If, for example, a man, through intemperance or extravagance, becomes unable to pay his debts, or, having undertaken the moral responsibility of a family, becomes from the same cause incapable of supporting or educating them, he is deservedly reprobated, and might be justly punished; but it is for the breach of duty to his family or creditors, not for the extravagance. If the resources which ought to have been devoted to them, had been diverted from them for the most prudent investment, the moral culpability would have been the same. George Barnwell¹ murdered his uncle to get money for his mistress, but if he had done it to set himself up in business, he would equally have been hanged. Again, in the frequent case of a man who causes grief to his family by addiction to bad habits, he deserves reproach for his unkindness or ingratitude; but so he may for cultivating habits not in themselves vicious, if they are painful to those with whom he passes his life, or who from personal ties are dependent on him for their comfort. Whoever fails in the consideration generally due to the interests and feelings of others, not being compelled by some more imperative duty, or justified by allowable self-preference, is a subject of moral disapprobation for that failure, but not for the cause of it, nor for the errors, merely personal to himself, which may have remotely led to it. In like manner, when a person disables himself, by conduct purely self-regarding, from the performance of some definite duty incumbent on him to the public, he is guilty of a social offence. No person ought to be punished simply for being drunk; but a soldier or a policeman should be punished for being drunk on duty. Whenever, in short, there is a definite damage, or a definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public, the case is taken out of the province of liberty, and placed in that of morality or law.

CHAPTER V

APPLICATIONS

I have already observed that, owing to the absence of any recognized general principles, liberty is often granted where it should be withheld, as well as withheld where it should be granted; and one of the cases in which, in the modern European world, the sentiment of liberty is the strongest, is a case where, in my view, it is altogether misplaced. A person should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns; but he ought not to be free to do as he likes in acting for another, under the pretext that the affairs of the other are his own affairs. The State, while it respects the liberty of each in what specially regards himself, is bound to maintain a vigilant control over his exercise of any power which it allows him to possess over others. This obligation is almost entirely disregarded in the case of the family relations, a case, in its direct influence on human happiness, more important than all others taken together. The almost despotic power of husbands over wives needs not be enlarged upon here, because nothing more is needed for the complete removal of the evil than that wives should have the same rights, and should receive the protection of law in the same manner, as all other persons; and because, on this subject, the defenders of established injustice do not avail themselves of the plea of liberty, but stand forth openly as the champions of power. It is in the case of children that misapplied notions of liberty are a real obstacle to the fulfilment by the State of its duties. One would almost think that a man's children were supposed to be literally, and not metaphorically, a part of himself, so jealous is opinion of the smallest interference of law with his absolute and exclusive control over them; more jealous than of almost any interference with his own freedom of action: so much less do the generality of mankind value liberty than power. Consider, for example, the case of education. Is it not almost a self-evident axiom, that the State should require and compel the education, up to a certain standard, of every human being who is born its citizen? Yet who is there that is not afraid to recognize and assert this truth? Hardly any one indeed will deny that it is one of the most sacred duties of the parents (or, as law and usage now stand, the father), after summoning a human being into the world, to give to that being an education fitting him to perform his part well in life

¹ George Barnwell was the hero of a play by that name, by George Lillo, produced in 1731.

towards others and towards himself. But while this is unanimously declared to be the father's duty, scarcely anybody, in this country, will bear to hear of obliging him to perform it. Instead of his being required to make any exertion or sacrifice for securing education to his child, it is left to his choice to accept it or not when it is provided gratis! It still remains unrecognized, that to bring a child into existence without a fair prospect of being able, not only to provide food for its body, but instruction and training for its mind, is a moral crime, both against the unfortunate offspring and against society; and that if the parent does not fulfil this obligation, the State ought to see it fulfilled, at the charge, as far as possible, of the parent.

Were the duty of enforcing universal education once admitted there would be an end to the difficulties about what the State should teach, and how it should teach, which now convert the subject into a mere battlefield for sects and parties, causing the time and labor which should have been spent in educating to be wasted in quarrelling about education. If the government would make up its mind to require for every child a good education, it might save itself the trouble of providing one. It might leave to parents to obtain the education where and how they pleased, and content itself with helping to pay the school fees of the poorer classes of children, and defraying the entire school expenses of those who have no one else to pay for them. The objections which are urged with reason against State education do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State, but to the State's taking upon itself to direct that education; which is a totally different thing. That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as any one in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character, and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct, involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for molding people to be exactly like one another: and as the mold in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body. An education established and controlled by

the State should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence. Unless, indeed, when society in general is in so backward a state that it could not or would not provide for itself any proper institutions of education unless the government undertook the task: then, indeed, the government may, as the less of two great evils, take upon itself the business of schools and universities, as it may that of joint stock companies, when private enterprise, in a shape fitted for undertaking great works of industry, does not exist in the country. But in general, if the country contains a sufficient number of persons qualified to provide education under government auspices, the same persons would be able and willing to give an equally good education on the voluntary principle, under the assurance of remuneration afforded by a law rendering education compulsory, combined with State aid to those unable to defray the expense.

I have reserved for the last place a large class of questions respecting the limits of government interference, which, though closely connected with the subject of this Essay, do not, in strictness, belong to it. These are cases in which the reasons against interference do not turn upon the principle of liberty: the question is not about restraining the actions of individuals, but about helping them; it is asked whether the government should do, or cause to be done, something for their benefit, instead of leaving it to be done by themselves, individually or in voluntary combination.

The objections to government interference, when it is not such as to involve infringement of liberty, may be of three kinds.

The first is, when the thing to be done is likely to be better done by individuals than by the government. Speaking generally, there is no one so fit to conduct any business, or to determine how or by whom it shall be conducted, as those who are personally interested in it. This principle condemns the interferences, once so common, of the legislature, or the officers of government, with the ordinary processes of industry. But this part of the subject has been sufficiently enlarged upon by political economists, and is not particularly related to the principles of this Essay.

The second objection is more nearly allied to our subject. In many cases, though indi-

viduals may not do the particular thing so well, on the average, as the officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them, rather than by the government, as a means to their own mental education—a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them a familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal. This is a principal, though not the sole, recommendation of jury trial (in cases not political); of free and popular local and municipal institutions; of the conduct of industrial and philanthropic enterprises by voluntary associations. These are not questions of liberty, and are connected with that subject only by remote tendencies; but they are questions of development. It belongs to a different occasion from the present to dwell on these things as parts of national education; as being, in truth, the peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns—habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another. Without these habits and powers, a free constitution can neither be worked nor preserved; as is exemplified by the too-often transitory nature of political freedom in countries where it does not rest upon a sufficient basis of local liberties. The management of purely local business by the localities, and of the great enterprises of industry by the union of those who voluntarily supply the pecuniary means, is further recommended by all the advantages which have been set forth in this Essay as belonging to individuality of development, and diversity of modes of action. Government operations tend to be everywhere alike. With individuals and voluntary associations, on the contrary, there are varied experiments, and endless diversity of experience. What the State can usefully do is to make itself a central depository, and active circulator and diffuser, of the experience resulting from many trials. Its business is to enable each experimentalist to benefit by the experiments of others; instead of tolerating no experiments but its own.

The third and most cogent reason for restricting the interference of government is the great evil of adding unnecessarily to its

power. Every function superadded to those already exercised by the government causes its influence over hopes and fears to be more widely diffused, and converts, more and more, the active and ambitious part of the public into hangers-on of the government, or of some party which aims at becoming the government. If the roads, the railways, the banks, the insurance offices, the great joint-stock companies, the universities, and the public charities, were all of them branches of the government; if, in addition, the municipal corporations and local boards, with all that now devolves on them, became departments of the central administration; if the employés of all these different enterprises were appointed and paid by the government, and looked to the government for every rise in life; not all the freedom of the press and popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name. And the evil would be greater, the more efficiently and scientifically the administrative machinery was constructed—the more skilful the arrangements for obtaining the best qualified hands and heads with which to work it. In England it has of late been proposed that all the members of the civil service of government should be selected by competitive examination, to obtain for these employments the most intelligent and instructed persons procurable; and much has been said and written for and against this proposal. One of the arguments most insisted on by its opponents is that the occupation of a permanent official servant of the State does not hold out sufficient prospects of emolument and importance to attract the highest talents, which will always be able to find a more inviting career in the professions, or in the service of companies and other public bodies. One would not have been surprised if this argument had been used by the friends of the proposition, as an answer to its principal difficulty. Coming from the opponents it is strange enough. What is urged as an objection is the safety-valve of the proposed system. If indeed all the high talent of the country *could* be drawn into the service of the government, a proposal tending to bring about that result might well inspire uneasiness. If every part of the business of society which required organized concert, or large and comprehensive views, were in the hands of the government, and if government offices were universally filled by the ablest men, all the enlarged culture and practised intelligence in the country,

except the purely speculative, would be concentrated in a numerous bureaucracy, to whom alone the rest of the community would look for all things: the multitude for direction and dictation in all they had to do; the able and aspiring for personal advancement. To be admitted into the ranks of this bureaucracy, and when admitted, to rise therein, would be the sole objects of ambition. Under this *régime*, not only is the outside public ill-qualified, for want of practical experience, to criticize or check the mode of operation of the bureaucracy, but even if the accidents of despotic or the natural working of popular institutions occasionally raise to the summit a ruler or rulers of reforming inclinations, no reform can be effected which is contrary to the interest of the bureaucracy. Such is the melancholy condition of the Russian empire, as shown in the accounts of those who have had sufficient opportunity of observation. The Czar himself is powerless against the bureaucratic body; he can send any one

of them to Siberia, but he cannot govern without them, or against their will. On every decree of his they have a tacit veto, by merely refraining from carrying it into effect. In countries of more advanced civilization and of a more insurrectionary spirit, the public, accustomed to expect everything to be done for them by the State, or at least to do nothing for themselves without asking from the State not only leave to do it, but even how it is to be done, naturally hold the State responsible for all evil which befalls them, and when the evil exceeds their amount of patience, they rise against the government, and make what is called a revolution; whereupon somebody else, with or without legitimate authority from the nation, vaults into the seat, issues his orders to the bureaucracy, and everything goes on much as it did before; the bureaucracy being unchanged, and nobody else being capable of taking their place.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (1800-1859)

Thomas Babington Macaulay was a happy and precocious child. His mother for whom he had a passionate devotion was of Quaker lineage; his father, an ex-governor of Sierra Leone, was a Presbyterian who devoted most of his life, after the birth of his eldest son, to anti-slavery agitation, and edited in that cause the *Christian Observer*. Before he was nine, the child had made for himself a "Compendium of Universal History," an accounting for dates from the creation to the year 1800, the date of his own birth.

At eighteen, he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he chiefly distinguished himself for his friendliness and his eloquent and witty conversation. It was at Cambridge under the influence of his friend, Charles Austin, that he made the one notable change of opinion in his whole life. He came to the University a Tory, and became a Whig, a cause of unnecessary alarm at first to his pious father, who could not foresee that his son would maintain moderation as a fetish throughout a life lived in stormy semi-revolutionary times.

Knight's *Quarterly Magazine* from time to time published short historical and classical essays by Macaulay, but his serious entry into the field of English literature was his essay on Milton, published in August, 1825, in the *Edinburgh Review*. The essay excited applause both from the public and from his fellow writers. The following year he was called to the bar, but he wrote more than he practised, and two years later was made a Commissioner in Bankruptcy by Lord Lyndhurst. His father's firm, Babington and Macaulay, having dwindled almost to nothing, the small security of the commissionership was fortunate both for Macaulay and his family, for whom he always felt constant affection and responsibility.

Macaulay entered Parliament in the midst of the battle over the Reform Bill, and his first speech on the subject swept England as his essay on Milton had. Sir Robert Peel said of it, "Portions were as beautiful as anything I have ever heard or read." His parliamentary career was soon halted by the necessity of accepting a place on the Supreme Council of India, at a salary of ten thousand pounds a year, by which he hoped to reinstate the family fortunes which were growing acutely distressful. His five years in India were largely spent as president of a commission to study Indian jurisprudence, in drafting a new Indian penal code. In his leisure he formed a plan for writing a history of England. Upon his return to England in 1838, he entered Parliament again as member for Edinburgh and in the following year became Secretary at War in Lord Melbourne's cabinet. The *Lays of Ancient Rome* were published in 1842, and after a year he collected and published his *Essays*. He began to work on his *History* in earnest, and from that time gradually relinquished interest in active political life. The first two volumes of the *History of England* appeared in December, 1848, and, before the publication of Volumes III and IV, seven years later, had been translated into twelve European tongues. Macaulay died in 1859.

Macaulay was distinctly a man of his own time, which he was never weary of contrasting to its advantage with earlier periods. He shared its admiration of material prosperity, and its trust in political progress. Although he had something of the romantic feeling for the past, inherited from Sir Walter Scott, he was rather of the realistic mind which we associate with the early eighteenth century. The most famous chapter of his *History* is the third, in which he writes in great detail of the social and material life of all classes in England at the time of the Restoration. He wrote many biographical essays for the *Edinburgh Review* on Englishmen (Bacon, Johnson, Hastings, Clive, Temple), and on European subjects (Machiavelli, Ranke's *History of the Popes*). His prose style was clear and epigrammatic. He enjoyed paradox, such as the contrast between Bacon's squalid private character and his splendid public service. He also gave popular form in his verse to stories from classical history, in his *Lays of Ancient Rome* and *Lays of Ancient Greece*. Altogether it is not too much to say that the current ideas of historical events and characters are largely those of Macaulay. Doubtless his absorption in his own time is a reason for the decline in his reputation. Men who cared for spiritual rather than material things, such as Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold, reprobated Macaulay's complacency and trust in machinery, mechanical or political. Carlyle passed the severest verdict on him in saying: "He had no vision."

The standard edition of Macaulay's works is edited by his nephew, G. O. Trevelyan, who has also written the chief biography. A brief life by J. Cotter Morrison is included in the English Men of Letters series.

MILTON

The *Essay on Milton*, published in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1825, marked the beginning of Macaulay's literary career. The essay shows Macaulay's opinions and style fully formed. As a Whig in politics he believed in the supremacy of Parliament over the Crown. As a Liberal he defended freedom of opinion and speech. Born himself into the middle class, he admired the moral virtues of the Puritans. He was thus prepared to sympathize with Milton in his life, and to defend his views. He had already achieved that mastery of antithesis and epigram, best seen in his contrast of Roundhead and Cavalier, and in his arraignment of Charles I; and his reading had furnished him with a multitude of allusions—both of which remained marked qualities of his style.

1825

Towards the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the state papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign dispatches written by Milton while he filled the office of secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials¹ and the Rye House Plot.² The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed, "To Mr. Skinner, Merchant." On examination the large manuscript proved to be the long-lost essay on the *Doctrines of Christianity*, which, according to Wood and Toland,³ Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it

is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament; and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner,¹ who was commanded by his Majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honorable to his talents and to his character. His version is not, indeed, very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of this subject compelled him to use many words

¹ These followed the unfounded charges of Titus Oates that there was a plot to overthrow Protestantism and establish the Roman Catholic Church in 1678.

² A conspiracy to murder Charles II and his brother James in 1683.

³ Early editors of Milton.

¹ A chaplain of George IV, later Bishop of Winchester.

"That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp."¹

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley. He wears the garb, but not the clothes, of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seem to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the *Paradise Lost* without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days and this essay will follow the *Defensio Populi*² to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint till they have awakened

the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him, — a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known, and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilized world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilization, supplied by their own powers the want of instruction; and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created: he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education; and we must, therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavorable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson has thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule.¹ The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilization which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

¹ From Milton's eleventh sonnet.

² Milton's *Defence of the English People*.

¹ In the *Life of Milton*, by Samuel Johnson.

We think that, as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely, the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcet's¹ little dialogues on political economy could teach Montague² or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an

enlightened society is philosophical; that of a half-civilized people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations — of a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge, but particularly is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury;³ he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius;² or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lachrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in *The Fable of the Bees*. But could Mandeville³ have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man — a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the

¹ Anthony Ashley Cooper (1671-1713), third Earl of Shaftesbury, one of the most noted forerunners of the Utilitarian school of thought.

² Claude Helvetius (1715-71), a French philosopher.

³ Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), whose chief work, *The Fable of the Bees*, is a satire on political society.

¹ Mrs. Jane Marcet (1760-1858).

² Charles Montague (1661-1712), afterwards Lord Halifax, Chancellor of the Exchequer under William III.

art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colors. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigor and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled:

"As imagination bodies forth

The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

These are the fruits of the "fine frenzy" which he ascribes to the poet, — a fine frenzy, doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just, but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence, of all people, children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding Hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society, men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare, but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, — the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists,¹ according

¹ professional reciters of verse.

to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping-knife while he shouts his death song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilized community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth, and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigor and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labor, and long meditation employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education; he was a profound and elegant classical scholar; he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature; he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of

his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination; nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the Middle Ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the *Paradise Lost* should have written the *Epistle to Manso* was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed, in all the Latin poems of Milton, the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

"About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of heaven; but nigh at hand
Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold."¹

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed

as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style which no rival has been able to equal and no parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering, innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests; not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the *Iliad*. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed unless the mind of the reader coöperate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the keynote, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing; but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence, substitute one synonym for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale,² when he stood crying, "Open Wheat,"

¹ *Paradise Lost*, IV, 551-54.

² Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.

"Open Barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden¹ in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the *Paradise Lost* is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations we may remark, that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known, or more frequently repeated, than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood — the schoolroom, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamored knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and the *Penseroso*. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as attar of roses differs from ordinary rosewater, the close-packed essence from the thin, diluted mixture. They are, indeed, not so much poems as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The *Comus* and the *Samson Agonistes* are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays. There are, perhaps, no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as un-

pleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery, in which a single movable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us, successively, from the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters — patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers — the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself without reserve to his own devotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavored to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek drama, on the model of which the *Samson* was written, sprang from the ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists coöperated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. Æschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tintured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and Æschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The Book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnifi-

¹ In *The State of Innocence*, an opera by Dryden, based on *Paradise Lost*.

cence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity, not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance, but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly — much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed, the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's poet" sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairyland kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the *Samson Agonistes*. Had Milton taken Æschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent, he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The *Comus* is framed on the model of the Italian masque, as the *Samson* is framed on the model of the Greek tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to the *Faithful Shepherdess* as the *Faithful Shepherdess* is to the *Aminta* or the *Aminta* to the *Pastor Fido*.⁴ It was well

for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His Muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May Day.¹ Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the *Comus* to the distinction which he afterwards neglected in the *Samson*. He made his masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," said the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique² delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labor of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own Good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis,³ he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

¹ So called in Milton's eighth sonnet.

² A pastoral drama by John Fletcher (1579-1625).

³ By the Italian poet Tasso (1544-95), more famous for his *Jerusalem Delivered*.

⁴ By Guarini (1537-1612).

¹ The first of May was a holiday for chimney sweeps.

² The Doric mood, in which the *Pastorals* of Theocritus were written, has come to typify the pastoral genre.

³ Thyrsis, a traditional character name in pastoral drama, used by Milton in *Comus*.

"Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run,"¹

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the *Paradise Regained*, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the *Paradise Lost*, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the *Paradise Lost* to the *Paradise Regained* is not more decided than the superiority of the *Paradise Regained* to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the *Paradise Lost* is the *Divine Comedy*. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the color, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveler. Unlike those of other poets, and

especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn, not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem, but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon¹ was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out, huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea monster which the mariner mistakes for an island.² When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas; his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod: "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome, and his other limbs were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair." We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Cary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar house in the eleventh book of the *Paradise Lost*³ with the last ward of Malebolge⁴ in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery: Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance; Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was

¹ Phlegethon, the burning river, one of the streams in the Greek Hades and in Dante's *Inferno*. Aqua Cheta is a river of Romagna.

² *Paradise Lost*, I, 194; IV, 985.

³ Book XI, 477 seq.

⁴ Malebolge; the eighth circle of Hell. The word means, approximately, "horrible place."

such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs."¹

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedence between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The *Divine Comedy* is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death;² who has read the dusky characters³ on the portal within which there is no hope; who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon;⁴ who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghignazzo.⁵ His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer.⁶ His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel.⁷ The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity; with a sobriety even in its horrors; with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis⁸ differ from those of Gulliver. The author of *Amadis* would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift—the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands, and

philosophizing horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

5 Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him; and, as this is a point on which many rash and ill-considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery is that of attempting to philosophize too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word, 30 but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials 35 which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colors to be called a 40 painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions, but the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained 45 on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshiped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred 50 to the sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions,

1 *Inferno*, XXIX, 46–51.

2 i.e., for the death of the soul. *Inferno*, I, 117.

3 "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." *Inferno*, III, 9.

4 *Inferno*, IX, 56.

5 The names of fiends. *Inferno*, XXI, 120, 121.

6 *Inferno*, final canto. 7 *Purgatorio*, IX, 112.

8 The hero of *Amadis of Gaul*, an early Spanish romance of chivalry.

and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception, but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor,¹ and the swords of thirty legions, were humbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George² took the place of Mars. St. Elmo³ consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity, and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings, but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations we infer that no poet, who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous,

was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical coloring can produce no illusion when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirits should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque, indeed, beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest, but it is not the interest which is

¹ The attendant of Roman executives, who carried as his badge of authority the *fasces*, an axe in a bundle of rods.

² St. George of Cappadocia, the patron saint of England.

³ St. Elmo replaced Castor and Pollux and became the patron of Italian sailors.

proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and demons without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful, ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata¹ in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have been at an *avito da fé*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet, austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and dæmons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Æschylus seem to harmonize less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticos, in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favorite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart—the gigantic Titans and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his crea-

tions of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of Heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters, also, are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture; he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, colored by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit, that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the *Divine Comedy* we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within.

Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness."¹ The gloom of his character discolours all the passions of men and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woeful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Vernal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favorite writers of the sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of *Comus* — grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of satyrs and goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper

was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions and glowing with patriotic hopes — such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

Hence it was that, though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental harem; and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells beautiful as fairyland are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works, but it is most strongly displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja² in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet, as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an expected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed forever, led him to musings which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterize these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthol-

¹ Vincenzo da Filicaia (1642-1707), Florentine poet and scholar.

² Job, x, 22.

ogy,¹ or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The Sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind — at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes,² liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The Civil War, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty labored under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly.³ Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the

Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson.¹ May's ² *History of the Parliament* is good, but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow ³ is foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause — Oldmixon,⁴ for instance, and Catherine Macaulay ⁵ — have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candor or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language — that of Clarendon and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned, according as the resistance of the people to Charles I shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage-ground, but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm that every reason which can be urged in favor of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favor of what is called the Great Rebellion.

¹ Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson (1620–59), whose life of her husband was published in 1806.

² Thomas May (1594–1650).

³ General Edmund Ludlow (1620–93), whose *Memoirs* are referred to.

⁴ John Oldmixon (1673–1742).

⁵ Mrs. Catherine Macaulay (1733–91).

¹ The collection of Greek lyric verse from 400 B.C. to 600 A.D.

² Persian deities, Oromasdes representing the principle of good, Arimanes, the principle of evil.

³ *Spectator* No. 11.

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices — a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant, but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential and take only what is accidental; they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be anything unsound, these flesh flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that their

“Labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil.”¹

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights — liberty, security, toleration — all go for nothing with them. One sect² there was which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire³ there was so unhappily circumstanced that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them, not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced.

Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America: they stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right, which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury¹ are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era! The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory.² They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles or the liberal William, Ferdinand and the Catholic or Frederick the Protestant.³ On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James II was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant revolution.

But this certainly was not the case, nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's *Abridgment* believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily, not to Popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic, but they excluded Catholics from the Crown because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution,⁴ declared the throne vacant, was this: “that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom.” Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question,

¹ John, Lord Somers (1652–1716), Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury (1660–1718), respectively Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State under William III.

² The Whig toast to the memory of William III.

³ Frederick the Great, King of Prussia; Ferdinand V., King of Spain.

⁴ The Declaration of Right, 1689.

¹ *Paradise Lost*, I, 164, 165.

² Roman Catholics.

³ Ireland.

then, is this: Had Charles I broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the king himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion mention one act of James II to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of Parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of Parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate. The right of petition was grossly violated. Arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the king had consented to so many reforms and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship money¹ had been given up, the Star Chamber² had been abolished, provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of Parliaments. Why not pursue an confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He, too, had offered to call a free Parliament, and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years

of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the king. He had, no doubt, passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives, but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind; a man who made and broke promises with equal facility; a man whose honor had been a hundred times pawned and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right.¹ The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim — by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase — infringed by the perfidious king who had recognized them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another Parliament. Another chance was given to our fathers; were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut*?² Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

¹ The Petition of Right, presented to Charles I in 1628, declared against taxation without the consent of Parliament, unlawful imprisonment, quartering of troops, etc.

² "The King so wills," the formula of royal consent to a Parliamentary Act.

¹ A method of taxation employed by Charles I.

² The Court of the Star Chamber was an unconstitutional device of Charles I.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James II no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath, and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates,¹ and the defense is that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, "a good man, but a bad king." We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has

ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has labored, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them, but those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleeing their districts; soldiers reveling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag—all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the Civil War. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up

¹ Believers in establishing by force a Kingdom of Christ, a fifth monarchy in succession to those of Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome.

¹ Archbishop Laud (1573-1645).

under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our Civil War. The heads of the Church and State reaped only that which they had sown. The government had prohibited free discussion; it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres.¹ It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion, and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, skepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice; they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appear-

ance, and then ask in scorn where the promised splendor and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story² of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her; accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces, and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colors or recognize faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise

¹ Xeres; a Spanish town near Cadiz.

² *Orlando Furioso*, XLIII, 72.

and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of public liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blamable excesses of that time. The favorite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the king. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides.¹ We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The king can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister, only, ought to be responsible for the acts of the sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jeffreys and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a king is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the 5th of November,² thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposi-

tion fall before him until he became our king and governor, can, on the 30th of January,³ contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the king from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy"; but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage; his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father; they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the Regicides blamable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred, and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion, but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius² would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "*Æneæ magni dextra*,"³ gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar

¹ Members of the High Court of Justice which tried Charles I.

² The anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, and of the landing of William III in England.

¹ The anniversary of the execution of Charles I.

² Claude Salmasius (1588-1683), French professor of Leyden who wrote a *Defense of Charles I.*

³ "The right hand of great Æneas."

from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell — his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But, even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded, indeed, the first place in the Commonwealth, but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandizing himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his Parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then it must

be acknowledged he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect that, at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the Protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honor been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice,¹ were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second Protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presby-

¹ The petition that Cromwell accept the title of King and govern with the advice of Parliament.

terians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents,¹ sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love; of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices; the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds; the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The king cringed to his rival² that he might trample on his people; sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed with complacent infamy her degrading insults and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots and the jests of buffoons regulated the policy of the State. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha³ of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch;⁴ and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race, accursed of God and man, was a second time driven forth to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a byword and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And for that purpose it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of campfollowers, a useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, 55

abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose; who kissed the hand of the king in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649: who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn; who dined on calves' heads or on broiled rumps, and cut down oak branches or stuck them up, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

*"Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
Che mortali perigli in se contiene:
Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene."*¹

Those who roused the people to resistance; who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years; who formed, out of

¹ The Independents, of whom Milton was one, desired no general church government.

² Louis XIV of France.

³ 1 Corinthians, xvi, 22.

⁴ *Paradise Lost*, II, 43-225.

¹ "See here the fount of laughter! see the stream
To which such fatal qualities belong!
'Now,' they exclaimed, 'let us avoid the dream
Of warm desire, and in resolve be strong.'
Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, xv, 57, Fairfax's translation.

the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen; who trampled down king, church, and aristocracy; who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth,—were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations, had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles II was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play,¹ turn from the specious caskets which contain only the death's-head and the fool's-head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging in general terms an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know Him, to serve Him, to enjoy Him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with Him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but His favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their

palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems, crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt; for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest; who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed His will by the pen of the Evangelist and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men: the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker, but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane,¹ he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood,² he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid His face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at

¹ Sir Henry Vane the Younger (1612-62).

² Charles Fleetwood (1620-70), Cromwell's son-in-law.

¹ *Merchant of Venice*, III, II.

them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had cleared their mind from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus¹ with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach; and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system — intolerance and extravagant austerity; that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstons and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios² with regard to religious subjects, but

passionate worshipers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines¹ of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candor. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse boys, gamblers, and bravoës, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favorable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the king was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ — with the mutes who throng their ante-chambers, and the Janissaries who mount guard at their gates. Our Royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction, dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valor, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honor, the prejudices of childhood and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa; and, like the Red Cross Knight,² they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth, they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church

¹ *Fabrice Queene*, v. Artegal personifies Justice.

² See Acts, XVIII, 17.

¹ Or Girondists, the moderate party of the French Revolutionists.

² In the *Fabrice Queene*, i.

that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues — courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

"As ever in his great Taskmaster's eye."

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest skeptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honor and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonize best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the

gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero¹ of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Sirens, yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe, but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendor, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy² with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the "Penseroso," which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents, but his hand is firm. He does naught in hate, but all in honor. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendor still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a foresworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against ship money and the Star Chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press³ and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the king and

¹ Ulysses.

² pamphlets on church government.

³ Milton's *Areopagitica*.

¹ From Milton's seventh sonnet.

imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem,¹ who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

"Oh, ye mistook, ye should have snatched his wand,

And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dis severing power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed, and motionless."²

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle, but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system,³ in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded — the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome

vapors, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide.¹ He attacked the prevailing systems of education.² His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility:

"*Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit
Impetus, et rapido contrarius evohor orbi.*"³

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should in our time be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost* has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* and the nervous rhetoric of the *Iconoclast*, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the treatise *Of Reformation* and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*. But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be

¹ In the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643); and *Eikonoklastes* (1649).

² In *Of Education* (1644).

³ A reference to the sun, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, II, 72, 73; "I contend against opposition; nor does that force which conquers all else subdue me, and I ride on in a contrary way to the rapid heavens."

¹ *Comus*.

² *Comus*, lines 815-19.

³ In *Areopagitica*.

the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word; the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it; the earnestness with which we should endeavor to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues; the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Ellwood,¹ the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize, and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr² of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to de-

light, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he labored for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

FRANCIS BACON

1837

The essay on Bacon, written in review of *The Works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England*. A New Edition. By Basil Montagu, Esq., 16 vols., London, 1825-1834, appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1837. It is one of the longest and most characteristic of Macaulay's essays. Beginning with an account of Bacon's life and character, it continues with an appreciation of his philosophy with which Macaulay was in entire sympathy. The extracts here given bear witness to Macaulay's own practical habit of mind, his reliance on applied science as a means of promoting welfare, and his belief in the machinery of well-being as a test of civilization—an attitude to which such prophets as Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold were sternly opposed.

Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrine, Utility and Progress. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings. All the schools contemned that office as degrading; some censured it as immoral. Once indeed Posidonius, a distinguished writer of the age of Cicero and Cæsar, so far forgot himself as to enumerate, among the humbler blessings which mankind owed to philosophy, the discovery of the principle of the arch, and the introduction of the use of metals. This eulogy was considered as an affront, and was taken up with proper spirit. Seneca vehemently disclaims these insulting compliments. Philosophy, according to him, has nothing to do with teaching men to rear arched roofs over their heads. The true

¹ Thomas Ellwood (1629-1713), in whose *Autobiography* there is an account of Milton.

² In Massinger's play of that name.

philosopher does not care whether he has an arched roof or any roof. Philosophy has nothing to do with teaching men the uses of metals. She teaches us to be independent of all material substances, of all mechanical contrivances. The wise man lives according to nature. Instead of attempting to add to the physical comforts of his species, he regrets that his lot was not cast in that golden age when the human race had no protection against the cold but the skins of wild beasts, no screen from the sun but a cavern. To impute to such a man any share in the invention or improvement of a plough, a ship, or a mill is an insult. "In my own time," says Seneca, "there have been inventions of this sort, transparent windows, tubes for diffusing warmth equally through all parts of a building, shorthand, which has been carried to such a perfection that a writer can keep pace with the most rapid speaker. But the inventing of such things is drudgery for the lowest slaves; philosophy lies deeper. It is not her office to teach men how to use their hands. The object of her lessons is to form the soul. *Non est, inquam, instrumentorum ad usus necessarios opifex.*"¹ If the *non* were left out, this last sentence would be no bad description of the Baconian philosophy, and would, indeed, very much resemble several expressions in the *Novum Organum*. "We shall next be told," exclaims Seneca, "that the first shoemaker was a philosopher." For our own part, if we are forced to make our choice between the first shoemaker and the author of the three books "On Anger," we pronounce for the shoemaker. It may be worse to be angry than to be wet. But shoes have kept millions from being wet; and we doubt whether Seneca ever kept anybody from being angry.

It is very reluctantly that Seneca can be brought to confess that any philosopher had ever paid the smallest attention to anything that could possibly promote what vulgar people would consider as the well-being of mankind. He labors to clear Democritus from the disgraceful imputation of having made the first arch, and Anacharsis from the charge of having contrived the potter's wheel. He is forced to own that such a thing might happen; and it may also happen, he tells us, that a philosopher may be swift of foot. But it is not in his character of philosopher that he either wins a race or invents a machine. No, to be sure. The business of a philosopher was to declaim in praise of

poverty with two millions sterling out at usury, to meditate epigrammatic conceits about the evils of luxury, in gardens which moved the envy of sovereigns, to rant about liberty, while fawning on the insolent and pampered freedmen of a tyrant, to celebrate the divine beauty of virtue with the same pen which had just before written a defence of the murder of a mother by a son.

From the cant of this philosophy, a philosophy meanly proud of its own unprofitableness, it is delightful to turn to the lessons of the great English teacher. We can almost forgive all the faults of Bacon's life when we read that singularly graceful and dignified passage: "*Ego certe, ut de me ipso, quod res est, loquar, et in iis quæ nunc edo, et in iis quæ in posterum meditor, dignitatem ingenii et nominis mei, si qua sit, sæpius sciens et volens projicio, dum commodis humanis inserviam; quique architectus fortasse in philosophia et scientiis esse debeam, etiam operarius, et bajulus, et quidvis demum fio, cum haud pauca quæ omnino fieri necesse sit, alii autem ob innatam superbiam subterfugiant, ipsi sustineam et exsequar.*"² This philanthropia, which, as he said in one of the most remarkable of his early letters, "was so fixed in his mind, as it could not be removed," this majestic humility, this persuasion that nothing can be too insignificant for the attention of the wisest, which is not too insignificant to give pleasure or pain to the meanest, is the great characteristic distinction, the essential spirit of the Baconian philosophy. We trace it in all that Bacon has written on Physics, on Laws, on Morals. And we conceive that from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of his system directly and almost necessarily sprang.

The spirit which appears in the passage of Seneca to which we have referred tainted the whole body of the ancient philosophy from the time of Socrates downwards, and took possession of intellects with which that of Seneca cannot for a moment be compared. It pervades the dialogues of Plato. It may be distinctly traced in many parts of the works of Aristotle. Bacon has dropped hints from which it may be inferred that, in his

¹ "As for myself, to speak the truth, I have frequently neglected the glory of my order, name, and learning, both in the works I now publish and those which I have already designed to execute, in following out my direct purpose of advancing the happiness of mankind; so that I may fairly say, though marked out by nature to be the architect of philosophy and the sciences I have submitted to become a common workman and laborer, there being many mean things necessary to the erection of the structure, which others, out of a natural disdain, refused to attend to." *De Augmentis*, lib. vii, cap. i.

² It is not, I say, a maker of instruments for necessary use. Seneca, *Epist.* 90.

opinion, the prevalence of this feeling was in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Socrates. Our great countryman evidently did not consider the revolution which Socrates effected in philosophy as a happy event, and constantly maintained that the earlier Greek speculators, Democritus in particular, were, on the whole, superior to their more celebrated successors.¹

Assuredly if the tree which Socrates planted and Plato watered is to be judged of by its flowers and leaves, it is the noblest of trees. But if we take the homely test of Bacon, if we judge of the tree by its fruits, our opinion of it may perhaps be less favorable. When we sum up all the useful truths which we owe to that philosophy, to what do they amount? We find, indeed, abundant proofs that some of those who cultivated it were men of the first order of intellect. We find among their writings incomparable specimens both of dialectical and rhetorical art. We have no doubt that the ancient controversies were of use, in so far as they served to exercise the faculties of the disputants; for there is no controversy so idle that it may not be of use in this way. But, when we look for something more, for something which adds to the comforts or alleviates the calamities of the human race, we are forced to own ourselves disappointed. We are forced to say with Bacon that this celebrated philosophy ended in nothing but disputation, that it was neither a vineyard nor an olive-ground, but an intricate wood of briars and thistles, from which those who lost themselves in it brought back many scratches and no food.² . . .

The difference between the philosophy of Bacon and that of his predecessors cannot, we think, be better illustrated than by comparing his views on some important subjects with those of Plato. We select Plato, because we conceive that he did more than any other person towards giving to the minds of speculative men that bent which they retained till they received from Bacon a new impulse in a diametrically opposite direction.

It is curious to observe how differently these great men estimated the value of every kind of knowledge. Take Arithmetic for example. Plato, after speaking slightly of the convenience of being able to reckon and compute in the ordinary transactions of life, passes to what he considers as a far more important

advantage. The study of the properties of numbers, he tells us, habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth, and raises us above the material universe. He would have his disciples apply themselves to this study, not that they may be able to buy or sell, not that they may qualify themselves to be shopkeepers or travelling merchants, but that they may learn to withdraw their minds from the ever-shifting spectacle of this visible and tangible world, and to fix them on the immutable essences of things.³

Bacon, on the other hand, valued this branch of knowledge, only on account of its uses with reference to that visible and tangible world which Plato so much despised. He speaks with scorn of the mystical arithmetic of the later Platonists, and laments the propensity of mankind to employ, on mere matters of curiosity, powers the whole exertion of which is required for purposes of solid advantage. He advises arithmeticians to leave these trifles, and to employ themselves in framing convenient expressions, which may be of use in physical researches.⁴

The same reasons which led Plato to recommend the study of arithmetic led him to recommend also the study of mathematics. The vulgar crowd of geometers, he says, will not understand him. They have practice always in view. They do not know that the real use of the science is to lead men to the knowledge of abstract, essential, eternal truth.⁵ Indeed, if we are to believe Plutarch, Plato carried this feeling so far that he considered geometry as degraded by being applied to any purpose of vulgar utility. Archytas, it seems, had framed machines of extraordinary power on mathematical principles.⁶ Plato remonstrated with his friend, and declared that this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft, fit only for carpenters and wheelwrights. The office of geometry, he said, was to discipline the mind, not to minister to the base wants of the body. His interference was successful; and from that time, according to Plutarch, the science of mechanics was considered as unworthy of the attention of a philosopher.

Archimedes in a later age imitated and surpassed Archytas. But even Archimedes was not free from the prevailing notion that geometry was degraded by being employed

¹ *Novum Organum*, lib. i, aph. 71, 79. *De Augmentis*, lib. iii, cap. iv. *De principiis, atque originibus. Cogitata et visa. Redargutio philosophiarum.* (Macaulay's note.)

² *Novum Organum*, lib. i, aph. 73. (Macaulay's note.)

³ Plato's *Republic*, book vii. (Macaulay's note.)

⁴ *De Augmentis*, lib. iii, cap. 6. (Macaulay's note.)

⁵ Plato's *Republic*, book vii. (Macaulay's note.)

⁶ Plutarch, *Sympos.*, viii, and *Life of Marcellus*. The machines of Archytas are also mentioned by Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius. (Macaulay's note.)

to produce anything useful. It was with difficulty that he was induced to stoop from speculation to practice. He was half ashamed of those inventions which were the wonder of hostile nations, and always spoke of them slightly as mere amusements, as trifles in which a mathematician might be suffered to relax his mind after intense application to the higher parts of his science.

The opinion of Bacon on this subject was diametrically opposed to that of the ancient philosophers. He valued geometry chiefly, if not solely, on account of those uses, which to Plato appeared so base. And it is remarkable that the longer Bacon lived the stronger this feeling became. When in 1605 he wrote the two books on the *Advancement of Learning*, he dwelt on the advantages which mankind derived from mixed mathematics; but he at the same time admitted that the beneficial effect produced by mathematical study on the intellect, though a collateral advantage, was "no less worthy than that which was principal and intended." But it is evident that his views underwent a change. When, near twenty years later, he published the *De Augmentis*, which is the *Treatise on the Advancement of Learning*, greatly expanded and carefully corrected, he made important alterations in the part which related to mathematics. He condemned with severity the high pretensions of the mathematicians, "delicias et fastum mathematicorum."¹ Assuming the well-being of the human race to be the end of knowledge, he pronounced that mathematical science could claim no higher rank than that of an appendage or auxiliary to other sciences. Mathematical science, he says, is the handmaid of natural philosophy; she ought to demean herself as such; and he declares that he cannot conceive by what ill chance it has happened that she presumes to claim precedence over her mistress. He predicts — a prediction which would have made Plato shudder — that as more and more discoveries are made in physics, there will be more and more branches of mixed mathematics. Of that collateral advantage the value of which, twenty years before, he rated so highly, he says not one word. This omission cannot have been the effect of mere inadvertence. His own treatise was before him. From that treatise he deliberately expunged whatever was favorable to the study of pure mathematics, and inserted several keen reflections on the ardent votaries of that study. This fact, in our opinion, admits of

1 pretensions and pride of the mathematicians.

only one explanation. Bacon's love of those pursuits which directly tend to improve the condition of mankind, and his jealousy of all pursuits merely curious, had grown upon him, and had, it may be, become immoderate. He was afraid of using any expression which might have the effect of inducing any man of talents to employ in speculations, useful only to the mind of the speculator, a single hour which might be employed in extending the empire of man over matter.² If Bacon erred here, we must acknowledge that we greatly prefer his error to the opposite error of Plato. We have no patience with a philosophy which, like those Roman matrons who swallowed abortives in order to preserve their shapes, takes pains to be barren for fear of being homely. . . .

On the greatest and most useful of all human inventions, the invention of alphabetical writing, Plato did not look with much complacency. He seems to have thought that the use of letters had operated on the human mind as the use of the go-cart in learning to walk, or of corks in learning to swim, is said to operate on the human body. It was a support which, in his opinion, soon became indispensable to those who used it, which made vigorous exertion first unnecessary and then impossible. The powers of the intellect would, he conceived, have been more fully developed without this delusive aid. Men would have been compelled to exercise the understanding and the memory, and, by deep and assiduous meditation, to make truth thoroughly their own. Now, on the contrary, much knowledge is traced on paper, but little is engraved in the soul. A man is certain that he can find information at a moment's notice when he wants it. He therefore suffers it to fade from his mind. Such a man cannot in strictness be said to know anything. He has the show without the reality of wisdom. These opinions Plato has put into the mouth of an ancient king of Egypt.³ But it is evident from the context that they were his own; and so they were understood to be by Quintilian.⁴ Indeed they are in perfect accordance with the whole Platonic system.

Bacon's views, as may easily be supposed, were widely different.⁴ The powers of the memory, he observes, without the help of

¹ Compare the passage relating to mathematics in the Second Book of the *Advancement of Learning*, with the *De Augmentis*, lib. III, cap. 6. (Macauley's note.)

² Plato's *Phædrus*. (Macauley's note.)

³ Quintilian, XI. (Macauley's note.)

⁴ *De Augmentis*, lib. V, cap. 5. (Macauley's note.)

writing, can do little towards the advancement of any useful science. He acknowledges that the memory may be disciplined to such a point as to be able to perform very extraordinary feats. But on such feats he sets little value. The habits of his mind, he tells us, are such that he is not disposed to rate highly any accomplishment, however rare, which is of no practical use to mankind. As to these prodigious achievements of the memory, he ranks them with the exhibitions of rope-dancers and tumblers. "These two performances," he says, "are much of the same sort. The one is an abuse of the powers of the body; the other is an abuse of the powers of the mind. Both may perhaps excite our wonder; but neither is entitled to our respect."

To Plato, the science of medicine appeared to be of very disputable advantages.¹ He did not indeed object to quick cures for acute disorders, or for injuries produced by accidents. But the art which resists the slow sap of a chronic disease, which repairs frames enervated by lust, swollen by gluttony, or inflamed by wine, which encourages sensuality by mitigating the natural punishment of the sensualist, and prolongs existence when the intellect has ceased to retain its entire energy, had no share of his esteem. A life protracted by medical skill he pronounced to be a long death. The exercise of the art of medicine ought, he said, to be tolerated, so far as that art may serve to cure the occasional distempers of men whose constitutions are good. As to those who have bad constitutions, let them die; and the sooner the better. Such men are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their domestic affairs, for severe study and speculation. If they engage in any vigorous mental exercise, they are troubled with giddiness and fulness of the head, all which they lay to the account of philosophy. The best thing that can happen to such wretches is to have done with life at once. He quotes mythical authority in support of this doctrine; and reminds his disciples that the practice of the sons of Æsculapius, as described by Homer, extended only to the cure of external injuries.

Far different was the philosophy of Bacon. Of all the sciences, that which he seems to have regarded with the greatest interest was the science which, in Plato's opinion, would not be tolerated in a well-regulated community. To make men perfect was no part of Bacon's plan. His humble aim was to make

imperfect men comfortable. The beneficence of his philosophy resembled the beneficence of the common Father, whose sun rises on the evil and good, whose rain descends for the just and the unjust. In Plato's opinion man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion philosophy was made for man; it was a means to an end; and that end was to increase the pleasures and to mitigate the pains of millions who are not and cannot be philosophers. That a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales, should be treated as a *caput lupinum*² because he could not read the *Timæus* without a headache, was a notion which the humane spirit of the English school of wisdom altogether rejected. Bacon would not have thought it beneath the dignity of a philosopher to contrive an improved garden chair for such a valetudinarian, to devise some way of rendering his medicines more palatable, to invent repasts which he might enjoy, and pillows on which he might sleep soundly; and this though there might not be the smallest hope that the mind of the poor invalid would ever rise to the contemplation of the ideal beautiful and the ideal good. As Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of the art of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ, and reminded men that the great Physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the physician of the body. . . .

The boast of the ancient philosophers was that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was indeed the only practical good which the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect; and undoubtedly, if they had effected this, they would have deserved far higher praise than if they had discovered the most salutary medicines or constructed the most powerful machines. But the truth is that, in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than nothing. They promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beads; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.

¹ Plato's *Republic*, book III. (Macaulay's note.)

² A wolf's head, i.e., a dunce.

An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would, no doubt, be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born. A philosophy which should enable a man to feel perfectly happy while in agonies of pain would be better than a philosophy which assuages pain. But we know that there are remedies which will assuage pain; and we know that the ancient sages liked the toothache just as little as their neighbors. A philosophy which should extinguish cupidity would be better than a philosophy which should devise laws for the security of property. But it is possible to make laws which shall, to a very great extent, secure property. And we do not understand how any motives which the ancient philosophy furnished could extinguish cupidity. We know indeed that the philosophers were no better than other men. From the testimony of friends as well as of foes, from the confessions of Epictetus and Seneca, as well as from the sneers of Lucian and the fierce invectives of Juvenal, it is plain that these teachers of virtue had all the vices of their neighbors, with the additional vice of hypocrisy. Some people may think the object of the Baconian philosophy a low object, but they cannot deny that, high or low, it has been attained. They cannot deny that every year makes an addition to what Bacon called "fruit." They cannot deny that mankind have made, and are making, great and constant progress in the road which he pointed out to them. Was there any such progressive movement among the ancient philosophers? After they had been declaiming eight hundred years, had they made the world better than when they began? Our belief is that, among the philosophers themselves, instead of a progressive improvement there was a progressive degeneracy. An abject superstition which Democritus or Anaxagoras would have rejected with scorn, added the last disgrace to the long dotage of the Stoic and Platonic schools. Those unsuccessful attempts to articulate which are so delightful and interesting in a child, shock and disgust in an aged paralytic; and in the same way, those wild and mythological fictions which charm us, when we hear them lisped by Greek poetry in its infancy, excite a mixed sensation of pity and loathing, when mumbled by Greek philosophy in its old age. We

know that guns, cutlery, spy-glasses, clocks, are better in our time than they were in the time of our fathers, and were better in the time of our fathers than they were in the time of our grandfathers. We might, therefore, be inclined to think that, when a philosophy which boasted that its object was the elevation and purification of the mind, and which for this object neglected the sordid office of ministering to the comforts of the body, had flourished in the highest honor during many hundreds of years, a vast moral amelioration must have taken place. Was it so? Look at the schools of this wisdom four centuries before the Christian era and four centuries after that era. Compare the men whom those schools formed at those two periods. Compare Plato and Libanius. Compare Pericles and Julian. This philosophy confessed, nay boasted, that for every end but one it was useless. Had it attained that one end?

Suppose that Justinian, when he closed the schools of Athens, had called on the last few sages who still haunted the Portico,¹ and lingered round the ancient plane-trees, to show their title to public veneration: suppose that he had said: "A thousand years have elapsed since, in this famous city, Socrates posed Protagoras and Hippias;² during those thousand years a large proportion of the ablest men of every generation has been employed in constant efforts to bring to perfection the philosophy which you teach; that philosophy has been munificently patronized by the powerful; its professors have been held in the highest esteem by the public; it has drawn to itself almost all the sap and vigor of the human intellect: and what has it effected? What profitable truth has it taught us which we should not equally have known without it? What has it enabled us to do which we should not have been equally able to do without it?" Such questions, we suspect, would have puzzled Simplicius and Isidore. Ask a follower of Bacon what the new philosophy, as it was called in the time of Charles the Second, has effected for mankind, and his answer is ready; "It has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it

¹ The Portico, in Athens, was the teaching place of Zeno the Stoic, as the Academy was of Plato.

² In Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*.

has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendor of the day; it has extended the range of the human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its first fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A point which yesterday was invisible is its goal to-day, and will be its starting-post to-morrow."

Great and various as the powers of Bacon were, he owes his wide and durable fame chiefly to this, that all those powers received their direction from common sense. His love of the vulgar useful, his strong sympathy with the popular notions of good and evil, and the openness with which he avowed that sympathy, are the secret of his influence. There was in his system no cant, no illusion. He had no anointing for broken bones, no fine theories *de finibus*, no arguments to persuade men out of their senses. He knew that men, and philosophers as well as other men, do actually love life, health, comfort, honor, security, the society of friends, and do actually dislike death, sickness, pain, poverty, disgrace, danger, separation from those to whom they are attached. He knew that religion, though it often regulates and moderates these feelings, seldom eradicates them; nor did he think it desirable for mankind that they should be eradicated. The plan of eradicating them by conceits like those of Seneca, or syllogisms like those of Chrysippus, was too preposterous to be for a moment entertained by a mind like his. He did not understand what wisdom there could be in changing names where it was impossible to change things; in denying that blindness, hunger, the gout, the rack, were evils, and calling them *ἀποπροηγμένα*;¹ in refusing to acknowledge that health, safety, plenty, were good things, and dubbing them by the name of *ἀδιάφορα*.² In his opinions on all these subjects, he was not a Stoic, nor

an Epicurean, nor an Academic, but what would have been called by Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics, a mere *ιδιώτης*, a mere common man. And it was precisely because he was so that his name makes so great an era in the history of the world. It was because he dug deep that he was able to pile high. It was because, in order to lay his foundations, he went down into those parts of human nature which lie low, but which are not liable to change, that the fabric which he reared has risen to so stately an elevation, and stands with such immovable strength. . . .

By stimulating men to the discovery of new truth, Bacon stimulated them to employ the inductive method, the only method, even the ancient philosophers and the schoolmen themselves being judges, by which new truth can be discovered. By stimulating men to the discovery of useful truth, he furnished them with a motive to perform the inductive process well and carefully. His predecessors had been, in his phrase, not interpreters, but anticipators of nature. They had been content with the first principles at which they had arrived by the most scanty and slovenly induction. And why was this? It was, we conceive, because their philosophy proposed to itself no practical end, because it was merely an exercise of the mind. A man who wants to contrive a new machine or a new medicine has a strong motive to observe accurately and patiently, and to try experiment after experiment. But a man who merely wants a theme for disputation or declamation has no such motive. He is therefore content with premises grounded on assumption, or on the most scanty and hasty induction. Thus, we conceive, the schoolmen acted. On their foolish premises they often argued with great ability; and as their object was "*assensum subjugare, non res*,"¹ to be victorious in controversy not to be victorious over nature, they were consistent. For just as much logical skill could be shown in reasoning on false as on true premises. But the followers of the new philosophy, proposing to themselves the discovery of useful truth as their object, must have altogether failed of attaining that object if they had been content to build theories on superficial induction.

Bacon has remarked² that, in ages when philosophy was stationary, the mechanical arts went on improving. Why was this?

¹ A term in Stoic philosophy for the lesser goods.
² indifferent.

¹ *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 29. (Macaulay's note.)
"To conquer assent, not facts."
² *De Augmentis*, lib. I. (Macaulay's note.)

Evidently because the mechanic was not content with so careless a mode of induction as served the purpose of the philosopher. And why was the philosopher more easily satisfied than the mechanic? Evidently because the object of the mechanic was to mold things, whilst the object of the philosopher was only to mold words. Careful induction is not at all necessary to the making of a good syllogism. But it is indispensable to the making of a good shoe. Mechanics, therefore, have always been, as far as the range of their humble but useful callings extended, not anticipators but interpreters of nature. And when a philosophy arose, the object of which was to do on a large scale what the mechanic does on a small scale, to extend the power and to supply the wants of man, the truth of the premises, which logically is a matter altogether unimportant, became a matter of the highest importance; and the careless induction with which men of learning had previously been satisfied gave place, of necessity, to an induction far more accurate and satisfactory.

What Bacon did for inductive philosophy may, we think, be fairly stated thus. The objects of preceding speculators were objects which could be attained without careful induction. Those speculators, therefore, did not perform the inductive process carefully. Bacon stirred up men to pursue an object which could be attained only by induction, and by induction carefully performed; and consequently induction was more carefully performed. We do not think that the importance of what Bacon did for inductive philosophy has ever been overrated. But we think that the nature of his services is often mistaken, and was not fully understood even by himself. It was not by furnishing philosophers with rules for performing the inductive process well, but by furnishing them with a motive for performing it well, that he conferred so vast a benefit on society.

To give to the human mind a direction which it shall retain for ages is the rare prerogative of a few imperial spirits. It cannot, therefore, be uninteresting to inquire what was the moral and intellectual constitution which enabled Bacon to exercise so vast an influence on the world.

In the temper of Bacon — we speak of Bacon the philosopher, not of Bacon the lawyer and politician — there was a singular union of audacity and sobriety. The promises which he made to mankind might, to a

superficial reader, seem to resemble the rants which a great dramatist has put into the mouth of an Oriental conqueror half-crazed by good fortune and by violent passions:

“He shall have chariots easier than air,
Which I will have invented; and thyself
That art the messenger shall ride before him,
On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,
That shall be made to go with golden wheels,
I know not how yet.”¹

But Bacon performed what he promised. In truth, Fletcher would not have dared to make Arbaces promise, in his wildest fits of excitement, the title of what the Baconian philosophy has performed.

The true philosophical temperament may, we think, be described in four words, much hope, little faith; a disposition to believe that anything, however extraordinary, may be done; an indisposition to believe that anything extraordinary has been done. In these points the constitution of Bacon's mind seems to us to have been absolutely perfect. He was at once the Mammon and the Surly² of his friend Ben. Sir Epicure did not indulge in visions more magnificent and gigantic. Surly did not sift evidence with keener and more sagacious incredulity.

Closely connected with this peculiarity of Bacon's temper was a striking peculiarity of his understanding. With great minuteness of observation, he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being. The small fine mind of Labruyère had not a more delicate tact than the large intellect of Bacon. The *Essays* contain abundant proofs that no nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a house, a garden, or a court-masque, would escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it; and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it; and the armies of powerful Sultans might repose beneath its shade.

In keenness of observation he has been equalled, though perhaps never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was all his own. The glance with which he surveyed the intellectual universe resembled that which the Archangel, from the golden threshold of heaven, darted down into the new creation:

¹ From *A King and No King*, by John Fletcher.

² Sir Epicure Mammon and Surly are characters in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*.

"Round he surveyed, — and well might, where
 he stood
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of night's extended shade, — from eastern
 point
 Of Libra, to the fleecy star which bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
 Beyond the horizon." ¹

His knowledge differed from that of other men, as a terrestrial globe differs from an Atlas which contains a different country on every leaf. The towns and roads of England, France, and Germany are better laid down in the Atlas than on the globe. But while we are looking at England we see nothing of France; and while we are looking at France we see nothing of Germany. We may go to the Atlas to learn the bearings and distances of York and Bristol, or of Dresden and Prague. But it is useless if we want to know the bearings and distances of France and Martinique, or of England and Canada. On the globe we shall not find all the market towns in our own neighborhood; but we shall learn from it, the comparative extent and the relative position of all the kingdoms of the earth. "I have taken," said Bacon, in a letter written when he was only thirty-one, to his uncle Lord Burleigh, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In any other young man, indeed in any other man, this would have been a ridiculous flight of presumption. There have been thousands of better mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, botanists, mineralogists, than Bacon. No man would go to Bacon's works to learn any particular science or art, any more than he would go to a twelve-inch globe in order to find his way from Kennington turnpike to Clapham Common. The art which Bacon taught was the art of inventing arts. The knowledge in which Bacon excelled all men was a knowledge of the mutual relations of all departments of knowledge.

The mode in which he communicated his thoughts was peculiar to him. He had no touch of that disputatious temper which he often censured in his predecessors. He effected a vast intellectual revolution in opposition to a vast mass of prejudices; yet he never engaged in any controversy; nay, we cannot at present recollect, in all his philosophical works, a single passage of a controversial character. All those works might with propriety have been put into the form which he adopted in the work entitled *Cogi-*

tata et visa: ¹ "Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit." These are thoughts which have occurred to me: weigh them well: and take them or leave them.

Borgia said of the famous expedition of Charles the Eighth, that the French had conquered Italy, not with steel, but with chalk; for that the only exploit which they had found necessary for the purpose of taking military occupation of any place had been to mark the doors of the houses where they meant to quarter. Bacon often quoted this saying, and loved to apply it to the victories of his own intellect. ² His philosophy, he said, came as a guest, not as an enemy. She found no difficulty in gaining admittance, without a contest, into every understanding fitted, by its structure and by its capacity, to receive her. In all this we think that he acted most judiciously; first, because, as he has himself remarked, the difference between his school and other schools was a difference so fundamental that there was hardly any common ground on which a controversial battle could be fought; and, secondly, because his mind, eminently observant, pre-eminently discursive and capacious, was, we conceive, neither formed by nature nor disciplined by habit for dialectical combat.

Though Bacon did not arm his philosophy with the weapons of logic, he adorned her profusely with all the decorations of rhetoric. His eloquence, though not untainted with the vicious taste of his age, would alone have entitled him to a high rank in literature. He had a wonderful talent for packing thought close, and rendering it portable. In wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, he never had an equal, not even Cowley, not even the author of *Hudibras*. Indeed, he possessed this faculty, or rather this faculty possessed him, to a morbid degree. When he abandoned himself to it without reserve, as he did in the *Sapientia Veterum*, ³ and at the end of the second book of the *De Augmentis*, the feats which he performed were not merely admirable, but portentous, and almost shocking. On those occasions we marvel at him as clowns on a fair-day marvel at a juggler, and can hardly help thinking that the devil must be in him.

These, however, were freaks in which his ingenuity now and then wanted, with

¹ *Things thought and seen.*

² *Novum Organum*, lib. 1, aph. 35 and elsewhere. (Macaulay's note.)

³ *Wisdom of the Ancients.*

scarcely any other object than to astonish and amuse. But it occasionally happened that, when he was engaged in grave and profound investigations, his wit obtained the mastery over all his other faculties, and led him into absurdities into which no dull man could possibly have fallen. We will give the most striking instance which at present occurs to us. In the third book of the *De Augmentis* he tells us that there are some principles which are not peculiar to one science, but are common to several. That part of philosophy which concerns itself with these principles is, in his nomenclature, designated as *philosophia prima*. He then proceeds to mention some of the principles with which this *philosophia prima* is conversant. One of them is this. An infectious disease is more likely to be communicated while it is in progress than when it has reached its height. This, says he, is true in medicine. It is also true in morals; for we see that the example of very abandoned men injures public morality less than the example of men in whom vice has not yet extinguished all good qualities. Again, he tells us that in music a discord ending in a concord is agreeable, and that the same thing may be noted in the affections. Once more, he tells us, that in physics the energy with which a principle acts is often increased by the antiperistasis of its opposite; and that it is the same in the contests of factions. If the making of ingenious and sparkling similitudes like these be indeed the *philosophia prima*, we are quite sure that the greatest philosophical work of the nineteenth century is Mr. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. The similitudes which we have cited are very happy similitudes. But that a man like Bacon should have taken them for more, that he should have thought the discovery of such resemblances as these an important part of philosophy, has always appeared to us one of the most singular facts in the history of letters.

The truth is that his mind was wonderfully quick in perceiving analogies of all sorts. But, like several eminent men whom we could name, both living and dead, he sometimes appeared strangely deficient in the power of distinguishing rational from fanciful analogies, analogies which are arguments from analogies which are mere illustrations, analogies like that which Bishop Butler so ably pointed out, between natural and revealed religion, from analogies like that which Addison discovered, between the series of Grecian gods carved by Phidias and

the series of English kings painted by Kneller. This want of discrimination has led to many strange political speculations. Sir William Temple deduced a theory of government from the properties of the pyramid. Mr. Southey's whole system of finance is grounded on the phenomena of evaporation and rain. In theology, this perverted ingenuity has made still wilder work. From the time of Irenaeus and Origen down to the present day, there has not been a single generation in which great divines have not been led into the most absurd expositions of Scripture, by mere incapacity to distinguish analogies proper, to use the scholastic phrase, from analogies metaphorical.¹ It is curious that Bacon has himself mentioned this very kind of delusion among the *idola specus*;² and has mentioned it in language which, we are inclined to think, shows that he knew himself to be subject to it. It is the vice, he tells us, of subtle minds to attach too much importance to slight distinctions; it is the vice, on the other hand, of high and discursive intellects to attach too much importance to slight resemblances; and he adds that, when this last propensity is indulged to excess, it leads men to catch at shadows instead of substances.³

Yet we cannot wish that Bacon's wit had been less luxuriant. For, to say nothing of the pleasure which it affords, it was in the vast majority of cases employed for the purpose of making obscure truth plain, of making repulsive truth attractive, of fixing in the mind for ever truth which might otherwise have left but a transient impression.

The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason, and to tyrannize over the whole man. No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. It stopped at the first check from good sense. Yet, though disciplined to such obedience, it gave noble proofs of its vigor. In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world, amidst things as strange as any that are described in the Arabian Tales, or in those romances on which the curate and barber of Don Quixote's village performed so cruel an *auto-da-fé*, amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of Aladdin, fountains more wonderful than the golden

¹ See some interesting remarks on this subject in Bishop Berkeley's *Minute Philosopher*, dialogue iv. (Macauley's note.)

² Idols of the cave.

³ *Novum Organum*, lib. i, aph. 55. (Macauley's note.)

water of Parizade,¹ conveyances more rapid than the hippogryph of Ruggiero, arms more formidable than the lance of Astolfo, remedies more efficacious than the balsam of Fierabras.² Yet in his magnificent day-dreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned. He knew that all the secrets feigned by poets to have been written in the books of enchanters are worthless when compared with the mighty secrets 10 which are really written in the book of nature, and which, with time and patience, will be read there. He knew that all the wonders wrought by all the talismans in fable were trifles when compared to the wonders which might reasonably be expected from the philosophy of fruit, and that, if his words sank deep into the minds of men, they would produce effects such as superstition had never ascribed to the incantations of Merlin and Michael Scott. It was here that he loved to let his imagination loose. He loved to picture to himself the world as it would be when his philosophy should, in his own noble phrase, "have enlarged the bounds of human empire."³ We might refer to many instances. But we will content ourselves with the strongest, the description of the House of Solomon in the *New Atlantis*. By most of Bacon's contemporaries, and by some people 30 of our time, this remarkable passage would, we doubt not, be considered as an ingenious rodomontade, a counterpart to the adventures of Sinbad or Baron Munchausen. The truth is, that there is not to be found in any human composition a passage more eminently distinguished by profound and serene wisdom. The boldness and originality of the fiction is far less wonderful than the nice discernment which carefully excluded from that long list of prodigies everything that can be pronounced impossible, everything that can be proved to lie beyond the mighty magic of induction and time. Already some parts, and not the least startling parts, of this glorious prophecy have been accomplished, even according to the letter; and the whole, construed according to the spirit, is daily accomplishing all around us.

One of the most remarkable circumstances 50 in the history of Bacon's mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late.

¹ A reference to the "Story of the Sisters who envied their Younger Sister," from the *Arabian Nights*.

² Ruggiero, Astolfo and Fierabras are all characters in the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto.

³ *New Atlantis*. (Macaulay's note.)

In general, the development of the fancy is to the development of the judgment what the growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy. The fancy attains at an earlier period to the perfection of its beauty, its power, and its fruitfulness; and, as it is first to ripen, it is also first to fade. It has generally lost something of its bloom and freshness before the sterner faculties have reached maturity; and is commonly withered and barren while those faculties still retain all their energy. It rarely happens that the fancy and the judgment grow together. It happens still more rarely that the judgment grows faster than the fancy. This seems, however, to have been the case with Bacon. His boyhood and youth appear to have been singularly sedate. His gigantic scheme of philosophical reform is said by some writers to have been planned before he was fifteen, and was undoubtedly planned while he was still young. He observed as vigilantly, meditated as deeply, and judged as temperately when he gave his first work to the world as at the close of his long career. But in eloquence, in sweetness and variety of expression, and in richness of illustration, his later writings are far superior to those of his youth. In this respect the history of his mind bears some resemblance to the history of the mind of Burke. The treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful, though written on a subject which the coldest metaphysician could hardly treat without being occasionally betrayed into florid writing, is the most unadorned of all Burke's works. It appeared when he was twenty-five or twenty-six. When, at forty, he wrote the *Thoughts on the Causes of the existing Discontents*, his reason and his judgment had reached their full maturity; but his eloquence was still in its splendid dawn. At fifty, his rhetoric was quite as rich as good taste would permit; and when he died, at almost seventy, it had become ungracefully gorgeous. In his youth he wrote on the emotions produced by mountains and cascades, by the masterpieces of painting and sculpture, by the faces and necks of beautiful women, in the style of a Parliamentary report. In his old age he discussed treaties and tariffs in the most fervid and brilliant language of romance. It is strange that the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and the *Letter to a Noble Lord*, should be the productions of one man. But it is far more strange that the *Essay* should have been a production of his youth, and the *Letter* of his old age.

We will give very short specimens of

Bacon's two styles. In 1597, he wrote thus: "Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use: that is a wisdom without them, and won by observation. 5 Read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, have a present wit; and if he read little, have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories 15 make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, morals grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend." It will hardly be disputed that this is a passage to be "chewed and digested." We do 20 not believe that Thucydides himself has anywhere compressed so much thought into so small a space.

In the additions which Bacon afterwards made to the *Essays*, there is nothing superior 25 in truth or weight to what we have quoted. But his style was constantly becoming richer and softer. The following passage, first published in 1625, will show the extent of the change: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer evidence of God's favor. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall hear as many 35 hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needle-works and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. 45 Judge therefore of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue." 50

It is by the *Essays* that Bacon is best known to the multitude. The *Novum Organum* and the *De Augmentis* are much talked of, but little read. They have produced 55 indeed a vast effect on the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents. They

have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the *Essays* alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exoteric school, and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust to judge for themselves; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate ability questions with which they are familiar may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner-school.

Without any disparagement to the admirable treatise *De Augmentis*, we must say that, in our judgment, Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of the *Novum Organum*. All the peculiarities of his extraordinary mind are found there in the highest perfection. Many of the aphorisms, but particularly those in which he gives examples of the influence of the *idola*, show a nicety of observation that has never been surpassed. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prejudices, introduced so many new opinions. Yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit. It truly conquers with chalk and not with steel. Proposition after proposition enters into the mind, is received not as an invader, but as a welcome friend, and, though previously unknown, becomes at once domesticated. But what we most admire is the vast capacity of that intellect which, without effort, takes in at once all the domains of science, all the past, the present, and the future, all the errors of two thousand 45 years, all the encouraging signs of the passing times, all the bright hopes of the coming age. Cowley, who was among the most ardent, and not among the least discerning followers of the new philosophy, has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the *Novum Organum*, that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the great Lawgiver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter waters in which successive generations

have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest, and building no abiding city; before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye the long course of fertilizing rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distances of marts and havens, and portioning out all those wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba.

It is painful to turn back from contemplating Bacon's philosophy to contemplate his life. Yet without so turning back it is impossible fairly to estimate his powers. He left the University at an earlier age than that at which most people repair thither. While yet a boy he was plunged into the midst of diplomatic business. Thence he passed to the study of a vast technical system of law, and worked his way up through a succession of laborious offices to the highest post in his profession. In the meantime he took an active part in every Parliament; he was an adviser of the Crown: he paid court with the greatest assiduity and address to all whose favor was likely to be of use to him; he lived much in society; he noted the slightest peculiarities of character and the slightest changes of fashion. Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a thorough man of the world. The founding of a new philosophy, the imparting of a new direction to the minds of speculators, this was the amusement of his leisure, the work of hours occasionally stolen from the Woolsack and the Council Board. This consideration, while it increases the admiration with which we regard his intellect, increases also our regret that such an intellect should so often have been unworthily em-

ployed. He well knew the better course and had, at one time, resolved to pursue it. "I confess," said he in a letter written when he was still young, "that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends." Had his civil ends continued to be moderate, he would have been, not only the Moses, but the Joshua of philosophy. He would have fulfilled a large part of his own magnificent predictions. He would have led his followers, not only to the verge, but into the heart of the promised land. He would not merely have pointed out, but would have divided the spoil. Above all, he would have left, not only a great, but a spotless name. Mankind would then have been able to esteem their illustrious benefactor. We should not then be compelled to regard his character with mingled contempt and admiration, with mingled aversion and gratitude. We should not then regret that there should be so many proofs of the narrowness and selfishness of a heart, the benevolence of which was large enough to take in all races and all ages. We should not then have to blush for the disingenuousness of the most devoted worshipper of speculative truth, for the servility of the boldest champion of intellectual freedom. We should not then have seen the same man at one time far in the van, and at another time far in the rear of his generation. We should not then be forced to own that he who first treated legislation as a science was among the last Englishmen who used the rack, that he who first summoned philosophers to the great work of interpreting nature was among the last Englishmen who sold justice. And we should conclude our survey of a life placidly, honorably, beneficently passed, "in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries,"¹ with feelings very different from those with which we now turn away from the checkered spectacle of so much glory and so much shame.

¹ From a Letter of Bacon to Lord Burleigh. (Macauley's note.)

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801-1890)

John Henry Newman was born in London, February 21, 1801. He entered Trinity College, Oxford, in 1816, and six years later was elected to a fellowship at Oriel College. He was also vicar of Saint Mary's, Oxford, whither his sermons drew the more earnest and ardent undergraduates. In 1832 he made a trip to the Mediterranean, and saw something of the order and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church. While becalmed near Palermo on his return, he wrote the best known of his hymns, *Lead, Kindly Light*. He returned to England resolved to revive in the Church of England something of the splendor and power which had characterized the Church in the Middle Age. This was the object of the Oxford Movement which Newman and his friends launched in 1833, often called the "Tractarian Movement" because its arguments were put forth in the series of *Tracts for the Times*. With his views of the divine and authoritative character of the Church, Newman found it difficult to account for the claims both of the Anglican and the Roman churches, and in 1845 he joined the latter body. He was for four years rector of the Catholic University of Dublin, but the remainder of his long life he spent at the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri at Edgbaston. He was made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII in 1879. He died in 1890.

In 1864, the Reverend Charles Kingsley published a statement invoking Newman's authority for a statement that truth is not a virtue of the Roman clergy. Newman replied, and to close the controversy published his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, an autobiography giving a candid account of his religious life and conversion to the Roman Church. This work did much to gain for Newman the position among his countrymen which he held until his death and to strengthen the position of his Church. While rector of the University at Dublin he delivered the lectures which were later collected in *The Idea of a University*. His *Grammar of Assent* (1880) is an explanation of religious faith as the operation of a special sense for truth, the illative sense, which is above all human reason. He published also many volumes of sermons and lectures, and one of poetry which contains *The Dream of Gerontius*, a description of the hours of death and after death of a Christian, with a definiteness and naïveté which remind one of the original pre-Raphaelite painters.

Newman's English prose style is the most classically perfect of the nineteenth century. He writes with precise choice of word and delicate rhythm of sentence, an intimate sense of humor or of tenderness, and at times a sustained and sonorous eloquence. His style is in fact a mirror of his character in its high seriousness and grave beauty, which before his death made him a saint of the English people.

Newman's works are published by Longmans, Green & Co. The *Apologia and Essays on University Subjects* are included in Everyman's Library. A volume of selections with an admirable introductory essay by Lewis E. Gates is published by Henry Holt & Co.

APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA

1864

The following selection is from Chapter V, which gives a general account of Newman's religious views. It is a statement of the intellectual position of a believer in the authority of the Church as opposed to the scientific faith in conclusions drawn from observation and experiment.

Starting then with the being of a God (which, as I have said, is as certain to me as the certainty of my own existence, though when I try to put the grounds of that certainty into logical shape I find a difficulty in doing so in mood and figure to my satisfaction), I look out of myself into the world of men, and there I see a sight which fills me with unspeakable distress. The world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth, of which my whole being is so full; and the effect upon me is, in consequence, as a matter of necessity, as confusing as if it denied that I am in existence myself. If I looked into a

mirror, and did not see my face, I should have the sort of feeling which actually comes upon me, when I look into this living busy world, and see no reflexion of its Creator. This is, to me, one of the great difficulties of this absolute primary truth, to which I referred just now. Were it not for this voice, speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, or a polytheist when I looked into the world. I am speaking for myself only; and I am far from denying the real force of the arguments in proof of a God, drawn from the general facts of human society, but these do not warm me or enlighten me; they do not take away the winter of my desolation, or make the buds unfold and the leaves grow within me, and my moral being rejoice. The sight of the world is nothing else than the prophet's scroll, full of "lamentations, and mourning and woe."

To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their

mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken, of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers or truth, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, "having no hope and without God in the world" — all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.

What shall be said to this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact? I can only answer, that either there is no Creator, or this living society of men is in a true sense discarded from His presence. Did I see a boy of good make and mind, with the tokens on him of a refined nature, cast upon the world without provision, unable to say whence he came, his birth-place or his family connections, I should conclude that there was some mystery connected with his history, and that he was one, of whom, from one cause or other, his parents were ashamed. Thus only should I be able to account for the contrast between the promise and condition of his being. And so I argue about the world; *if* there be a God, *since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator. This is a fact, a fact as true as the fact of its existence; and thus the doctrine of what is theologically called original sin becomes to me almost as certain as that the world exists, and as the existence of God.

And now, supposing it were the blessed and loving will of the Creator to interfere in this anarchical condition of things, what are we to suppose would be the methods which might be necessarily or naturally involved in His object of mercy? Since the world is in so abnormal a state, surely it would be no surprise to me, if the interposition were of necessity equally extraordinary — or what is called miraculous. But that subject does

not directly come into the scope of my present remarks. Miracles as evidence, involve an argument; and of course I am thinking of some means which does not immediately run into argument. I am rather asking what must be the face-to-face antagonist, by which to withstand and baffle the fierce energy of passion, and the all-corroding, all-dissolving scepticism of the intellect in religious inquiries? I have no intention at all to deny, that truth is the real object of our reason, and that, if it does not attain to truth, either the premiss or the process is in fault; but I am not speaking of right reason, but of reason as it acts in fact and concretely in fallen man. I know that even the unaided reason, when correctly exercised, leads to a belief in God, in the immortality of the soul, and in a future retribution; but I am considering it actually and historically; and in this point of view, I do not think I am wrong in saying that its tendency is towards a simple unbelief in matters of religion. No truth, however sacred, can stand against it, in the long run; and hence it is that in the pagan world, when our Lord came, the last traces of the religious knowledge of former times were all but disappearing from those portions of the world in which the intellect had been active and had had a career.

And in these latter days, in like manner, outside the Catholic Church things are tending, with far greater rapidity than in that old time from the circumstance of the age, to atheism in one shape or other. What a scene, what a prospect, does the whole of Europe present at this day! and not only Europe, but every government and every civilization through the world, which is under the influence of the European mind! Especially, for it most concerns us, how sorrowful, in the view of religion, even taken in its most elementary, most attenuated form, is the spectacle presented to us by the educated intellect of England, France, and Germany! Lovers of their country and of their race, religious men, external to the Catholic Church, have attempted various expedients to arrest fierce wilful human nature in its onward course, and to bring it into subjection. The necessity of some form of religion for the interests of humanity, has been generally acknowledged: but where was the concrete representative of things invisible, which would have the force and the toughness necessary to be a breakwater against the deluge? Three centuries ago the establishment of religion, material, legal, and social, was gener-

ally adopted as the best expedient for the purpose, in those countries which separated from the Catholic Church; and for a long time it was successful; but now the crevices of those establishments are admitting the enemy. Thirty years ago, education was relied upon: ten years ago there was a hope that wars would cease for ever, under the influence of commercial enterprise and the reign of the useful and fine arts; but will any one venture to say that there is anything anywhere on this earth, which will afford a fulcrum for us, whereby to keep the earth from moving onwards?

The judgment, which experience passes on establishments or education, as a means of maintaining religious truth in this anarchical world, must be extended even to Scripture, though Scripture be divine. Experience proves surely that the Bible does not answer a purpose for which it was never intended. It may be accidentally the means of the conversion of individuals; but a book, after all, cannot make a stand against the wild living intellect of man, and in this day it begins to testify, as regards its own structure and contents, to the power of that universal solvent, which is so successfully acting upon religious establishments.

Supposing then it to be the Will of the Creator to interfere in human affairs, and to make provisions for retaining in the world a knowledge of Himself, so definite and distinct as to be proof against the energy of human scepticism, in such a case — I am far from saying that there was no other way — but there is nothing to surprise the mind, if He should think fit to introduce a power into the world, invested with the prerogative of infallibility in religious matters. Such a provision would be a direct, immediate, active, and prompt means of withstanding the difficulty; it would be an instrument suited to the need; and, when I find that this is the very claim of the Catholic Church, not only do I feel no difficulty in admitting the idea, but there is a fitness in it, which recommends it to my mind. And thus I am brought to speak of the Church's infallibility, as a provision adapted by the mercy of the Creator, to preserve religion in the world, and to restrain that freedom of thought, which of course in itself is one of the greatest of our natural gifts, and to rescue it from its own suicidal excesses. And let it be observed that, neither here nor in what follows, shall I have occasion to speak directly of the revealed body of truths, but only as they bear

upon the defence of natural religion. I say, that a power, possessed of infallibility in religious teaching, is happily adapted to be a working instrument, in the course of human affairs, for smiting hard and throwing back the immense energy of the aggressive intellect: — and in saying this, as in the other things that I have to say, it must still be recollected that I am all along bearing in mind my main purpose, which is a defence of myself.

I am defending myself here from a plausible charge brought against Catholics, as will be seen better as I proceed. The charge is this: — that I, as a Catholic, not only make profession to hold doctrines which I cannot possibly believe in my heart, but that I also believe in the existence of a power on earth, which at its own will imposes upon men any new set of *credenda*, when it pleases, by a claim to infallibility; in consequence, that my own thoughts are not my own property; that I cannot tell that to-morrow I may not have to give up what I hold to-day, and that the necessary effect of such a condition of mind must be a degrading bondage, or a bitter inward rebellion relieving itself in secret infidelity, or the necessity of ignoring the whole subject of religion in a sort of disgust, and of mechanically saying everything that the Church says, and leaving to others the defence of it. As then I have above spoken of the relation of my mind towards the Catholic Creed, so now I shall speak of the attitude which it takes up in the view of the Church's infallibility.

And first, the initial doctrine of the infallible teacher must be an emphatic protest against the existing state of mankind. Man had rebelled against his Maker. It was this that caused the divine interposition: and the first act of the divinely accredited messenger must be to proclaim it. The Church must denounce rebellion as of all possible evils the greatest. She must have no terms with it; if she would be true to her Master, she must ban and anathematize it. This is the meaning of a statement which has furnished matter for one of those special accusations to which I am at present replying: I have, however, no fault at all to confess in regard to it; I have nothing to withdraw, and in consequence I here deliberately repeat it. I said, "The Catholic Church holds it better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions on it to die of starvation in extremest agony, as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one

soul, I will not say, should be lost, but should commit one single verial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, or should steal one poor farthing without excuse." I think the principle here enunciated to be the mere preamble in the formal credentials of the Catholic Church, as an Act of Parliament might begin with a "*Whereas*." It is because of the intensity of the evil which has possession of mankind, that a suitable antagonist has been provided against it; and the initial act of that divinely-commissioned power is of course to deliver her challenge and to defy the enemy. Such a preamble then gives a meaning to her position in the world, and an interpretation to her whole course of teaching and action.

In like manner she has ever put forth, with most energetic distinctness, those other great elementary truths, which either are an explanation of her mission or give a character to her work. She does not teach that human nature is irreclaimable, else wherefore should she be sent? not that it is to be shattered and reversed, but to be extricated, purified, and restored; not that it is a mere mass of evil, but that it has the promise of great things, and even now has a virtue and a praise proper to itself. But in the next place she knows and she preaches that such a restoration, as she aims at effecting in it, must be brought about, not simply through any outward provision of preaching and teaching, even though it be her own, but from a certain inward spiritual power or grace imparted directly from above, and which is in her keeping. She has it in charge to rescue human nature from its misery, but not simply by raising it upon its own level, but by lifting it up to a higher level than its own. She recognizes in it real moral excellence though degraded, but she cannot set it free from earth except by exalting it towards heaven. It was for this end that a renovating grace was put into her hands, and therefore from the nature of the gift, as well as from the reasonableness of the case, she goes on, as a further point, to insist, that all true conversion must begin with the first springs of thought, and to teach that each individual man must be in his own person one whole and perfect temple of God, while he is also one of the living stones which build up a visible religious community. And thus the distinctions between nature and grace, and between outward and inward religion, become two further articles in what I have called the preamble of her divine commission.

Such truths as these she vigorously reiter-

ates, and pertinaciously inflicts upon mankind; as to such she observes no half-measures, no economical reserve, no delicacy or prudence. "Ye must be born again," is the simple, direct form of words which she uses after her Divine Master; "your whole nature must be re-born, your passions, and your affections, and your aims, and your conscience, and your will, must all be bathed in a new element, and reconsecrated to your Maker, and, the last not the least, your intellect." It was for repeating these points of her teaching in my own way, that certain passages of one of my volumes have been brought into the general accusation which has been made against my religious opinions. The writer has said that I was demented if I believed, and unprincipled if I did not believe in my statement that a lazy, ragged, filthy, story-telling beggar-woman, if chaste, sober, cheerful, and religious, had a prospect of heaven, which was absolutely closed to an accomplished statesman, or lawyer, or noble, be he ever so just, upright, generous, honorable, and conscientious, unless he had also some portion of the divine Christian grace; yet I should have thought myself defended from criticism by the words which our Lord used to the chief priests, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." And I was subjected again to the same alternative of imputations, for having ventured to say that consent to an unchaste wish was indefinitely more heinous than any lie viewed apart from its causes, its motives, and its consequences; though a lie, viewed under the limitation of these conditions, is a random utterance, an almost outward act, not directly from the heart, however disgraceful it may be, whereas we have the express words of our Lord to the doctrine that "whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." On the strength of these texts I have surely as much right to believe in these doctrines as to believe in the doctrine of original sin, or that there is a supernatural revelation, or that a Divine Person suffered, or that punishment is eternal.

Passing now from what I have called the preamble of that grant of power, with which the Church is invested, to that power itself, Infallibility, I make two brief remarks: on the one hand, I am not here determining anything about the essential seat of that power, because that is a question doctrinal, not historical and practical; nor, on the other hand, am I extending the direct subject-

matter, over which that power has jurisdiction, beyond religious opinion:— and now as to the power itself.

This power, viewed in its fullness, is as tremendous as the giant evil which has called for it. It claims, when brought into exercise in the legitimate manner, for otherwise of course it is but dormant, to have for itself a sure guidance into the very meaning of every portion of the divine message in detail, which was committed by our Lord to His apostles. It claims to know its own limits, and to decide what it can determine absolutely and what it cannot. It claims, moreover, to have a hold upon statements not directly religious, so far as this, to determine whether they indirectly relate to religion, and, according to its own definitive judgment, to pronounce whether or not, in a particular case, they are consistent with revealed truth. It claims to decide magisterially, whether infallibly or not, that such and such statements are or are not prejudicial to the apostolic *depositum* of faith, in their spirit or in their consequences, and to allow them, or condemn and forbid them, accordingly. It claims to impose silence at will on any matters, or controversies, of doctrine, which on its own *ipse dixit* it pronounces to be dangerous, or inexpedient, or inopportune. It claims that whatever may be the judgment of Catholics upon such acts, these acts should be received by them with those outward marks of reverence, submission, and loyalty, which Englishmen, for instance, pay to the presence of their sovereign, without public criticism on them, as being in their matter inexpedient, or in their manner violent or harsh. And lastly, it claims to have the right of inflicting spiritual punishment, of cutting off from the ordinary channels of the divine life, and of simply excommunicating, those who refuse to submit themselves to its formal declarations. Such is the infallibility lodged in the Catholic Church, viewed in the concrete, as clothed and surrounded by the appendages of its high sovereignty: it is, to repeat what I said above, a supereminent prodigious power sent upon earth to encounter and master a giant evil.

And now, having thus described it, I profess my own absolute submission to its claim. I believe the whole revealed dogma as taught by the apostles, as committed by the apostles to the Church, and as declared by the Church to me. I receive it, as it is infallibly interpreted by the authority to whom it is thus committed, and (implicitly) as it

shall be, in like manner, further interpreted by that same authority till the end of time. I submit, moreover, to the universally received traditions of the Church, in which lies the matter of those new dogmatic definitions which are from time to time made, and which in all times are the clothing and the illustration of the Catholic dogma as already defined. And I submit myself to those other decisions of the Holy See, theological or not, through the organs which it has itself appointed, which, waiving the question of their infallibility, on the lowest ground come to me with a claim to be accepted and obeyed. Also, I consider that, gradually and in the course of ages, Catholic inquiry has taken certain definite shapes, and has thrown itself into the form of a science, with a method and a phraseology of its own, under the intellectual handling of great minds, such as St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas;¹ and I feel no temptation at all to break in pieces the great legacy of thought thus committed to us for these latter days.

All this being considered to be a profession *ex animo*, as on my own part, so also on the part of the Catholic body, as far as I know it, it will at first sight be said that the restless intellect of our common humanity is utterly weighed down to the repression of all independent effort and action whatever, so that, if this is to be the mode of bringing it into order, it is brought into order only to be destroyed. But this is far from the result, far from what I conceive to be the intention of that high Providence who has provided a great remedy for a great evil—far from borne out by the history of the conflict between infallibility and reason in the past, and the prospect of it in the future. The energy of the human intellect “does from opposition grow;” it thrives and is joyous, with a tough elastic strength, under the terrible blows of the divinely-fashioned weapon, and is never so much itself as when it has lately been overthrown. It is the custom with Protestant writers to consider that, whereas there are two great principles in action in the history of religion, authority and private judgment, they have all the private judgment to themselves, and we have the full inheritance and the superincumbent oppression of authority. But this is not so; it is the vast Catholic body itself, and it only, which affords an arena for both combatants in that awful, never-dying duel. It is necessary for the very life of re-

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas (1227–1274).

ligion, viewed in its large operations and its history, that the warfare should be incessantly carried on. Every exercise of infallibility is brought out into act by an intense and varied operation of the reason, from within and without, and provokes again a reaction of reason against it; and, as in a civil polity the state exists and endures by means of the rivalry and collision, the encroachments and defeats of its constituent parts, so in like manner Catholic Christendom is no simple exhibition of religious absolutism, but it presents a continuous picture of authority and private judgment alternately advancing and retreating as the ebb and flow of the tide;—it is a vast assemblage of human beings with wilful intellects and wild passions, brought together into one by the beauty and the majesty of a superhuman power—into what may be called a large reformatory or training-school, not to be sent to bed, not to be buried alive, but for the melting, refining, and moulding, as in some moral factory, by an incessant noisy process (if I may proceed to another metaphor), of the raw material of human nature, so excellent, so dangerous, so capable of divine purposes.

St. Paul says in one place that this apostolical power is given him to edification, and not to destruction. There can be no better account of the infallibility of the Church. It is a supply for a need, and it does not go beyond that need. Its object is, and its effect also, not to enfeeble the freedom or vigor of human thought in religious speculation, but to resist and control its extravagance. What have been its great works? All of them in the distinct province of theology:—to put down Arianism, Eutychianism, Pelagianism, Manichæism, Lutheranism, Jansenism. Such is the broad result of its action in the past;—and now as to the securities which are given us that so it ever will act in time to come.

First, infallibility cannot act outside of a definite circle of thought, and it must in all its decisions, or *definitions*, as they are called, profess to be keeping within it. The great truths of the moral law, of natural religion, and of apostolical faith, are both its boundary and its foundation. It must not go beyond them, and it must ever appeal to them. Both its subject-matter, and its articles in that subject-matter, are fixed. Thus, in illustration, it does not extend to statements, however sound and evident, which are mere logical conclusions from the articles of the

apostolic *depositum*; again, it can pronounce nothing about the persons of heretics, whose works fall within its legitimate province. It must ever profess to be guided by Scripture and by tradition. It must refer to the particular apostolic truth which it is enforcing, or (what is called) *defining*. Nothing, then, can be presented to me, in time to come, as part of the faith, but what I ought already to have received, and have not actually received, (if not) merely because it has not been told me. Nothing can be imposed upon me different in kind from what I hold already—much less contrary to it. The new truth which is promulgated, if it is to be called new, must be at least homogeneous, cognate, implicit, viewed relatively to the old truth. It must be what I may even have guessed, or wished, to be included in the apostolic revelation; and at least it will be of such a character, that my thoughts readily concur in it or coalesce with it, as soon as I hear it. Perhaps I and others actually have always believed it, and the only question which is now decided in my behalf, is that I am henceforth to believe that I have only been holding what the apostles held before me. . . .

THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY

(1852)

In 1852 Newman delivered a series of lectures, as rector of the Catholic University at Dublin, on *The Scope and Nature of University Education*, which, with other lectures on university subjects, later constituted the volume called *The Idea of a University*. The following lecture was the fourth of the original series, later numbered five. It is an excellent example of Newman's easy and persuasive style combined with logical exactness of thought. His view of the value of knowledge, and the justification of philosophy may be compared with Macaulay's in his *Essay on Bacon*.

DISCOURSE V

LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE ITS OWN END

A University may be considered with reference either to its Students or to its Studies; and the principle, that all Knowledge is a whole and the separate Sciences parts of one, which I have hitherto been using in behalf of its studies, is equally important when we direct our attention to its students. Now then I turn to the students, and shall consider the education which, by virtue of this principle, a University will give them; and thus I shall be introduced, Gentlemen, to the

second question, which I proposed to discuss, viz., whether and in what sense its teaching, viewed relatively to the taught, carries the attribute of Utility along with it.

1

I have said that all branches of knowledge are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as being the acts and the work of the Creator. Hence it is that the Sciences, into which our knowledge may be said to be cast, have multiplied bearings one on another, and an internal sympathy, and admit, or rather demand, comparison and adjustment. They complete, correct, balance, each other. This consideration, if well-founded, must be taken into account, not only as regards the attainment of truth, which is their common end, but as regards the influence which they exercise upon those whose education consists in the study of them. I have said already, that to give undue prominence to one is to be unjust to another; to neglect or supersede these is to divert those from their proper object. It is to unsettle the boundary lines between science and science, to disturb their action, to destroy the harmony which binds them together. Such a proceeding will have a corresponding effect when introduced into a place of education. There is no science but tells a different tale, when viewed as a portion of a whole, from what it is likely to suggest when taken by itself, without the safeguard, as I may call it, of others.

Let me make use of an illustration. In the combination of colors, very different effects are produced by a difference in their selection and juxtaposition; red, green, and white change their shades, according to the contrast to which they are submitted. And, in like manner, the drift and meaning of a branch of knowledge varies with the company in which it is introduced to the student. If his reading is confined simply to one subject, however such division of labor may favor the advancement of a particular pursuit, a point into which I do not here enter, certainly it has a tendency to contract his mind. If it is incorporated with others, it depends on those others as to the kind of influence which it exerts upon him. Thus the Classics, which in England are the means of refining the taste, have in France subserved the spread of revolutionary and deistical doctrines. In Metaphysics, again, Butler's *Analogy of Religion* which has had so much to do with the conversion of members of the University of

Oxford, appeared to Pitt and others, who had received a different training, to operate only in the direction of infidelity. And so again, Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, as I think he tells us in the narrative of his life, felt the science of Mathematics to indispose the mind to religious belief, while others see in its investigations the best defence of the Christian Mysteries. In like manner, I suppose, Arcesilas would not have handled logic as Aristotle, nor Aristotle have criticized poets as Plato; yet reasoning and poetry are subject to scientific rules.

It is a great point then to enlarge the range of studies which a University professes, even for the sake of the students; and, though they cannot pursue every subject which is open to them, they will be the gainers by living among those and under those who represent the whole circle. This I conceive to be the advantage of a seat of universal learning, considered as a place of education. An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought, by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, to aid each other. Thus is created a pure and clear atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes, though in his own case he only pursues a few sciences out of the multitude. He profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and its shades, its great points and its little, as he otherwise cannot apprehend them. Hence it is that his education is called "Liberal." A habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom; or what in a former Discourse I have ventured to call a philosophical habit. This then I would assign as the special fruit of the education furnished at a University, as contrasted with other places of teaching or modes of teaching. This is the main purpose of a University in its treatment of its students.

And now the question is asked me, What is the use of it? And my answer will constitute the main subject of the Discourses which are to follow.

2

Cautious and practical thinkers, I say, will ask of me, what, after all, is the gain of this Philosophy, of which I make such account, and from which I promise so much. Even supposing it to enable us to give the degree of confidence exactly due to every science respectively, and to estimate precisely the value of every truth which is anywhere to be found, how are we better for this master view of things, which I have been extolling? Does it not reverse the principle of the division of labor? will practical objects be obtained better or worse by its cultivation? to what then does it lead? where does it end? what does it do? how does it profit? what does it promise? Particular sciences are respectively the basis of definite arts, which carry on to results tangible and beneficial the truths which are the subjects of the knowledge attained; what is the Art of this science of sciences? what is the fruit of such a Philosophy? what are we proposing to effect, what inducements do we hold out to the Catholic community, when we set about the enterprise of founding a University?

I am asked what is the end of University Education, and of the Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge which I conceive it to impart: I answer, that what I have already said has been sufficient to show that it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though the end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Knowledge is capable of being its own end. Such is the constitution of the human mind, that any kind of knowledge, if it be really such, is its own reward. And if this is true of all knowledge, it is true also of that special Philosophy, which I have made to consist in a comprehensive view of truth in all its branches, of the relations of science to science, of their mutual bearings, and their respective values. What the worth of such an acquirement is, compared with other objects which we seek — wealth or power or honor or the conveniences and comforts of life, I do not profess here to discuss; but I would maintain, and mean to show, that it is an object, in its own nature so really and undeniably good, as to be the compensation of a great deal of thought in the compassing, and a great deal of trouble in the attaining.

Now, when I say that Knowledge is, not merely a means to something beyond it, or the preliminary of certain arts into which it naturally resolves, but an end sufficient to rest in and to pursue for its own sake, surely

I am uttering no paradox, for I am stating what is both intelligible in itself, and has ever been the common judgment of philosophers and the ordinary feeling of mankind. I am saying what at least the public opinion of this day ought to be slow to deny, considering how much we have heard of late years, in opposition to Religion, of entertaining, curious, and various knowledge. I am but saying what whole volumes have been written to illustrate, by a "selection from the records of Philosophy, Literature, and Art, in all ages and countries, of a body of examples, to show how the most unpropitious circumstances have been unable to conquer an ardent desire for the acquisition of knowledge." That further advantages accrue to us and redound to others by its possession, over and above what it is in itself, I am very far indeed from denying; but, independent of these, we are satisfying a direct need of our nature in its very acquisition; and, whereas our nature, unlike that of the inferior creation, does not at once reach its perfection, but depends, in order to it, on a number of external aids and appliances, Knowledge, as one of the principal gifts or accessories by which it is completed, is valuable for what its very presence in us does for us after the manner of a habit, even though it be turned to no further account, nor subserve any direct end.

3

Hence it is that Cicero, in enumerating the various heads of mental excellence, lays down the pursuit of Knowledge for its own sake, as the first of them. "This pertains most of all to human nature," he says, "for we are all of us drawn to the pursuit of Knowledge; in which to excel we consider excellent, whereas to mistake, to err, to be ignorant, to be deceived, is both an evil and a disgrace." And he considers Knowledge the very first object to which we are attracted, after the supply of our physical wants. After the calls and duties of our animal existence, as they may be termed, as regards ourselves, our family, and our neighbors, follows, he tells us, "the search after truth. Accordingly, as soon as we escape from the pressure of necessary cares, forthwith we desire to see, to hear, to learn; and consider the knowledge of what is hidden or is wonderful a condition of our happiness."

This passage, though it is but one of many

¹ Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties. Introd. (Newman's note.)

² Cicero. *Offic. init.* (Newman's note.)

similar passages in a multitude of authors, I take for the very reason that it is so familiarly known to us; and I wish you to observe, Gentlemen, how distinctly it separates the pursuit of Knowledge from those ulterior objects to which certainly it can be made to conduce, and which are, I suppose, solely contemplated by the persons who would ask of me the use of a University or Liberal Education. So far from dreaming of the cultivation of Knowledge directly and mainly in order to our physical comfort and enjoyment, for the sake of life and person, of health, of the conjugal and family union, of the social tie and civil security, the great Orator implies, that it is only after our physical and political needs are supplied, and when we are "free from necessary duties and cares," that we are in a condition for "desiring to see, to hear, and to learn." Nor does he contemplate in the least degree the reflex or subsequent action of Knowledge, when acquired, upon those material goods which we set out by securing before we seek it; on the contrary, he expressly denies its bearing upon social life altogether, strange as such a procedure is to those who live after the rise of the Baconian philosophy, and he cautions us against such a cultivation of it as will interfere with our duties to our fellow-creatures. "All these methods," he says, "are engaged in the investigation of truth; by the pursuit of which to be carried off from public occupations is a transgression of duty. For the praise of virtue lies altogether in action; yet intermissions often occur, and then we recur to such pursuits; not to say that the incessant activity of the mind is vigorous enough to carry us on in the pursuit of knowledge, even without any exertion of our own." The idea of benefiting society by means of "the pursuit of science and knowledge" did not enter at all into the motives which he would assign for their cultivation.

This was the ground of the opposition which the elder Cato made to the introduction of Greek Philosophy among his countrymen, when Carneades¹ and his companions, on occasion of their embassy, were charming the Roman youth with their eloquent expositions of it. The fit representative of a practical people, Cato estimated everything by what it produced; whereas the Pursuit of Knowledge promised nothing beyond Knowledge itself. He despised that refinement or

enlargement of mind of which he had no experience.

4

Things, which can bear to be cut off from everything else and yet persist in living, must have life in themselves; pursuits, which issue in nothing, and still maintain their ground for ages, which are regarded as admirable, though they have not as yet proved themselves to be useful, must have their sufficient end in themselves, whatever it turn out to be. And we are brought to the same conclusion by considering the force of the epithet, by which the knowledge under consideration is popularly designated. It is common to speak of "*liberal* knowledge," of the "*liberal* arts and studies," and of a "*liberal* education," as the especial characteristic or property of a University and of a gentleman; what is really meant by the word? Now, first, in its grammatical sense it is opposed to *servile*; and by "*servile* work" is understood, as our catechisms inform us, bodily labor, mechanical employment, and the like, in which the mind has little or no part. Parallel to such works are those arts, if they deserve the name, of which the poet speaks, which owe their origin and their method to hazard, not to skill; as, for instance, the practice and operations of an empiric. As far as this contrast may be considered as a guide into the meaning of the word, liberal knowledge and liberal pursuits are exercises of mind, of reason, of reflection.

But we want something more for its explanation, for there are bodily exercises which are liberal, and mental exercises which are not so. For instance, in ancient times the practitioners in medicine were commonly slaves; yet it was an art as intellectual in its nature, in spite of the pretence, fraud, and quackery with which it might then, as now, be debased, as it was heavenly in its aim. And so in like manner, we contrast a liberal education with a commercial education or a professional; yet no one can deny that commerce and the professions afford scope for the highest and most diversified powers of mind. There is then a great variety of intellectual exercises, which are not technically called "*liberal*"; on the other hand, I say, there are exercises of the body which do receive that appellation. Such, for instance, was the *palæstra*, in ancient times; such the Olympic games, in which strength and dexterity of body as well as of mind gained the prize. In Xenophon we read of the young

¹ Carneades, Critolaus and Diogenes, Athenian philosophers, visited Rome in 156 B.C. on a political embassy, and while there lectured on philosophy.

Persian nobility being taught to ride on horseback and to speak the truth; both being among the accomplishments of a gentleman. War, too, however rough a profession, has ever been accounted liberal, unless in cases when it becomes heroic, which would introduce us to another subject.

Now comparing these instances together, we shall have no difficulty in determining the principle of this apparent variation in the application of the term which I am examining. Manly games, or games of skill, or military prowess, though bodily, are, it seems, accounted liberal; on the other hand, what is merely professional, though highly intellectual, nay, though liberal in comparison of trade and manual labor, is not simply called liberal, and mercantile occupations are not liberal at all. Why this distinction? because that alone is liberal knowledge, which stands on its own pretensions, which is independent of sequel, expects no complement, refuses to be *informed* (as it is called) by any end, or absorbed into any art, in order duly to present itself to our contemplation. The most ordinary pursuits have this specific character, if they are self-sufficient and complete; the highest lose it, when they minister to something beyond them. It is absurd to balance, in point of worth and importance, a treatise on reducing fractures with a game of cricket or a fox-chase; yet of the two the bodily exercise has that quality which we call "liberal," and the intellectual has it not. And so of the learned professions altogether, considered merely as professions; although one of them be the most popularly beneficial, and another the most politically important, and the third the most intimately divine of all human pursuits, yet the very greatness of their end, the health of the body, or of the commonwealth, or of the soul, diminishes, not increases, their claim to the appellation "liberal," and that still more, if they are cut down to the strict exigencies of that end. If, for instance, Theology, instead of being cultivated as a contemplation, be limited to the purposes of the pulpit or be represented by the catechism, it loses — not its usefulness, not its divine character, not its meritoriousness (rather it increases these qualities by such charitable condescension) — but it does lose the particular attribute which I am illustrating; just as a face worn by tears and fasting loses its beauty, or a laborer's hand loses its delicateness; — for Theology thus exercised is not simple knowledge, but rather is an art or a business making use of Theol-

ogy. And thus it appears that even what is supernatural need not be liberal, nor need a hero be a gentleman, for the plain reason that one idea is not another idea. And in like manner the Baconian Philosophy, by using its physical sciences in the service of man, does thereby transfer them from the order of Liberal Pursuits to, I do not say the inferior, but the distinct class of the Useful. And, to take a different instance, hence again, as is evident, whenever personal gain is the motive, still more distinctive an effect has it upon the character of a given pursuit; thus racing, which was a liberal exercise in Greece, forfeits its rank in times like these, so far as it is made the occasion of gambling.

All that I have been now saying is summed up in a few characteristic words of the great Philosopher. "Of possessions," he says, "those rather are useful, which bear fruit; those *liberal, which tend to enjoyment*. By fruitful, I mean, which yield revenue; by enjoyable, where *nothing accrues of consequence beyond the use.*"¹

5

Do not suppose, Gentlemen, that in thus appealing to the ancients, I am throwing back the world two thousand years, and fettering Philosophy with the reasonings of paganism. While the world lasts, will Aristotle's doctrine on these matters last, for he is the oracle of nature and of truth. While we are men, we cannot help, to a great extent, being Aristotelians, for the great Master does but analyze the thoughts, feelings, views, and opinions of human kind. He has told us the meaning of our own words and ideas, before we were born. In many subject-matters, to think correctly, is to think like Aristotle; and we are his disciples whether we will or no, though we may not know it. Now, as to the particular instance before us, the word "liberal" as applied to Knowledge and Education, expresses a specific idea, which ever has been, and ever will be, while the nature of man is the same, just as the idea of the Beautiful is specific, or of the Sublime, or of the Ridiculous, or of the Sordid. It is in the world now, it was in the world then; and, as in the case of the dogmas of faith, it is illustrated by a continuous historical tradition, and never was out of the world, from the time it came into it. There have indeed been differences of opinion from time to time, as to what pursuits and what arts came under that idea, but such differences are but

¹ Aristot. *Rhet.* 1, 5. (Newman's note.)

an additional evidence of its reality. That idea must have a substance in it, which has maintained its ground amid these conflicts and changes, which has ever served as a standard to measure things withal, which has passed from mind to mind unchanged, when there was so much to color, so much to influence any notion or thought whatever, which was not founded in our very nature. Were it a mere generalization, it would have varied with the subjects from which it was generalized; but though its subjects vary with the age, it varies not itself. The palaestra may seem a liberal exercise to Lycurgus, and illiberal to Seneca; coach-driving and prize-fighting may be recognized in Elis, and be condemned in England; music may be despicable in the eyes of certain moderns, and be in the highest place with Aristotle and Plato — (and the case is the same in the particular application of the idea of Beauty, or of Goodness, or of Moral Virtue, there is a difference of tastes, a difference of judgments) — still these variations imply, instead of discrediting, the archetypal idea, which is but a previous hypothesis or condition, by means of which issue is joined between contending opinions, and without which there would be nothing to dispute about.

I consider, then, that I am chargeable with no paradox, when I speak of a Knowledge which is its own end, when I call it liberal knowledge, or a gentleman's knowledge, when I educate for it, and make it the scope of a University. And still less am I incurring such a charge, when I make this acquisition consist, not in Knowledge in a vague and ordinary sense, but in that Knowledge which I have especially called Philosophy or, in an extended sense of the word, Science; for whatever claims Knowledge has to be considered as a good, these it has in a higher degree when it is viewed not vaguely, not popularly, but precisely and transcendently as Philosophy. Knowledge, I say, is then especially liberal, or sufficient for itself, apart from every external and ulterior object, when and so far as it is philosophical, and this I proceed to show.

6

Now bear with me, Gentlemen, if what I am about to say, has at first sight a fanciful appearance. Philosophy, then, or Science, is related to Knowledge in this way: — Knowledge is called by the name of Science or Philosophy, when it is acted upon, informed, or if I may use a strong figure, impregnated

by Reason. Reason is the principle of that intrinsic fecundity of Knowledge, which, to those who possess it, is its especial value, and which dispenses with the necessity of their looking abroad for any end to rest upon external to itself. Knowledge, indeed, when thus exalted into a scientific form, is also power; not only is it excellent in itself, but whatever such excellence may be, it is something more, it has a result beyond itself. Doubtless; but that is a further consideration, with which I am not concerned. I only say that, prior to its being a power, it is a good; that it is, not only an instrument, but an end. I know well it may resolve itself into an art, and terminate in a mechanical process, and in tangible fruit; but it also may fall back upon that Reason, which informs it, and resolve itself into Philosophy. In one case it is called Useful Knowledge, in the other Liberal. The same person may cultivate it in both ways at once; but this again is a matter foreign to my subject; here I do but say that there are two ways of using Knowledge, and in matter of fact those who use it in one way are not likely to use it in the other, or at least in a very limited measure. You see, then, here are two methods of Education; the end of the one is, to be philosophical, of the other to be mechanical; the one rises towards general ideas, the other is exhausted upon what is particular and external. Let me not be thought to deny the necessity, or to decry the benefit, of such attention to what is particular and practical, as belongs to the useful or mechanical arts; life could not go on without them; we owe our daily welfare to them; their exercise is the duty of the many, and we owe to the many a debt of gratitude for fulfilling that duty. I only say that Knowledge, in proportion as it tends more and more to be particular, ceases to be Knowledge. It is a question whether Knowledge can in any proper sense be predicated of the brute creation; without pretending to metaphysical exactness of phraseology, which would be unsuitable to an occasion like this, I say, it seems to me improper to call that passive sensation, or perception of things, which brutes seem to possess, by the name of Knowledge. When I speak of Knowledge, I mean something intellectual, something which grasps what it perceives through the senses; something which takes a view of things; which sees more than the senses convey; which reasons upon what it sees, and while it sees; which invests it with an idea. It expresses itself, not in a mere enunciation,

but by an enthymeme: it is of the nature of science from the first, and in this consists its dignity. The principle of real dignity in Knowledge, its worth, its desirableness, considered irrespectively of its results, is this germ within it of a scientific or a philosophical process. This is how it comes to be an end in itself; this is why it admits of being called Liberal. Not to know the relative disposition of things is the state of slaves or children; to have mapped out the Universe is the boast, or at least the ambition, of Philosophy.

Moreover, such knowledge is not a mere extrinsic or accidental advantage, which is ours to-day and another's to-morrow, which may be got up from a book, and easily forgotten again, which we can command or communicate at our pleasure, which we can borrow for the occasion, carry about in our hand, and take into the market; it is an acquired illumination, it is a habit, a personal possession, and an inward endowment. And this is the reason, why it is more correct, as well as more usual, to speak of a University as a place of education, than of instruction, though, when knowledge is concerned, instruction would at first sight have seemed the more appropriate word. We are instructed, for instance, in manual exercises, in the fine and useful arts, in trades, and in ways of business; for these are methods, which have little or no effect upon the mind itself, are contained in rules committed to memory, to tradition, or to use, and bear upon an end external to themselves. But education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of a character; it is something individual and permanent, and is commonly spoken of in connection with religion and virtue. When, then, we speak of the communication of Knowledge as being Education, we thereby really imply that that Knowledge is a state or condition of mind; and since cultivation of mind is surely worth seeking for its own sake, we are thus brought once more to the conclusion, which the word "Liberal" and the word "Philosophy" have already suggested, that there is a Knowledge, which is desirable, though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labor.

7

This, then, is the answer which I am prepared to give to the question with which I opened this Discourse. Before going on to speak of the object of the Church in taking

up Philosophy, and the uses to which she puts it, I am prepared to maintain that Philosophy is its own end, and, as I conceive, I have now begun proving it. I am prepared to maintain that there is a knowledge worth possessing for what it is, and not merely for what it does; and what minutes remain to me to-day I shall devote to the removal of some portion of the indistinctness and confusion with which the subject may in some minds be surrounded.

It may be objected then, that, when we profess to seek Knowledge for some end or other beyond itself, whatever it be, we speak intelligibly; but that, whatever men may have said, however obstinately the idea may have kept its ground from age to age, still it is simply unmeaning to say that we seek Knowledge for its own sake, and for nothing else; for that it ever leads to something beyond itself, which therefore is its end, and the cause why it is desirable; — moreover, that this end is twofold, either of this world or of the next; that all knowledge is cultivated either for secular objects or for eternal; that if it is directed to secular objects, it is called Useful Knowledge, if to eternal, Religious or Christian Knowledge; — in consequence, that if, as I have allowed, this Liberal Knowledge does not benefit the body or estate, it ought to benefit the soul; but if the fact be really so, that it is neither a physical or a secular good on the one hand, nor a moral good on the other, it cannot be a good at all, and is not worth the trouble which is necessary for its acquisition.

And then I may be reminded that the professors of this Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge have themselves, in every age, recognized this exposition of the matter, and have submitted to the issue in which it terminates; for they have ever been attempting to make men virtuous; or, if not, at least have assumed that refinement of mind was virtue, and that they themselves were the virtuous portion of mankind. This they have professed on the one hand; and on the other, they have utterly failed in their professions, so as ever to make themselves a proverb among men, and a laughing-stock both to the grave and the dissipated portion of mankind, in consequence of them. Thus they have furnished against themselves both the ground and the means of their own exposure, without any trouble at all to any one else. In a word, from the time that Athens was the University of the world, what has Philosophy taught men, but to

promise without practising, and to aspire without attaining? What has the deep and lofty thought of its disciples ended in but eloquent words? Nay, what has its teaching ever meditated, when it was boldest in its remedies for human ill, beyond charming us to sleep by its lessons, that we might feel nothing at all? like some melodious air, or rather like those strong and transporting perfumes, which at first spread their sweetness over everything they touch, but in a little while do but offend in proportion as they once pleased us. Did Philosophy support Cicero under the disfavor of the fickle populace, or nerve Seneca to oppose an imperial tyrant? It abandoned Brutus, as he sorrowfully confessed, in his greatest need, and it forced Cato, as his panegyrist strangely boasts, into the false position of defying heaven. How few can be counted among its professors, who, like Polemo, were thereby converted from a profligate course, or like Anaxagoras, thought the world well lost in exchange for its possession? The philosopher in *Rasselas* taught a superhuman doctrine, and then succumbed without an effort to a trial of human affection.

"He discoursed," we are told, "with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher. He communicated the various precepts given, from time to time, for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope. . . . He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil."

Rasselas in a few days found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you have come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever." "Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised; we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected."

"Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one who has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you, then, forgot the precept," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? . . . consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? Of what effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?"

8

Better, far better, to make no professions, you will say, than to cheat others with what we are not, and to scandalize them with what we are. The sensualist, or the man of the world, at any rate is not the victim of fine words, but pursues a reality and gains it. The Philosophy of Utility, you will say, Gentlemen, has at least done its work; and I grant it, — it aimed low, but it has fulfilled its aim. If that man of great intellect who has been its Prophet in the conduct of life played false to his own professions, he was not bound by his philosophy to be true to his friend or faithful in his trust. Moral virtue was not the line in which he undertook to instruct men; and though, as the poet calls him, he were the "meanest" of mankind, he was so in what may be called his private capacity, and without any prejudice to the theory of induction. He had a right to be so, if he chose, for anything that the Idols of the den or the theatre had to say to the contrary. His mission was the increase of physical enjoyment and social comfort; and most wonderfully, most awfully has he fulfilled his conception and his design. Almost day by day have we fresh and fresh shoots, and buds, and blossoms, which are to ripen into fruit, on that magical tree of Knowledge which he planted, and to which none of us perhaps, except the very poor, but owes, if not his present life, at least his daily food, his health, and general well-being. He was the divinely provided minister of temporal benefits to all of us so great, that, whatever I am forced to think of him as a man, I have not the heart, from mere gratitude, to speak of him severely. And, in spite of the tendencies of his philosophy, which are, as we see at this day, to depreciate, or to trample on Theology, he has himself, in his writings, gone out of his way, as if with a prophetic misgiving of those tend-

I It will be seen that on the whole I agree with Lord Macaulay in his Essay on Bacon's Philosophy. I do not know whether he would agree with me. (Newman's note.)

encies, to insist on it as the instrument of that beneficent Father,¹ who, when He came on earth in visible form, took on Him first and most prominently the office of assuaging the bodily wounds of human nature. And truly, like the old mediciner in the tale, "he sat diligently at his work, and hummed, with cheerful countenance, a pious song;" and then in turn "went out singing into the meadows so gaily, that those who had seen him from afar might well have thought it was a youth gathering flowers for his beloved, instead of an old physician gathering healing herbs in the morning dew."²

Alas, that men, in the action of life or in their heart of hearts, are not what they seem to be in their moments of excitement, or in their trances or intoxications of genius — so good, so noble, so serene! Alas, that Bacon too in his own way should after all be but the fellow of those heathen philosophers who in their disadvantages had some excuse for their inconsistency, and who surprise us rather in what they did say than in what they did not do! Alas, that he too, like Socrates or Seneca, must be stripped of his holy-day coat, which looks so fair, and should be but a mockery amid his most majestic gravity of phrase; and, for all his vast abilities, should, in the littleness of his own moral being, but typify the intellectual narrowness of his school! However, granting all this, heroism after all was not his philosophy: I cannot deny he has abundantly achieved what he proposed. His is simply a Method whereby bodily discomforts and temporal wants are to be most effectually removed from the greatest number; and already, before it has shown any signs of exhaustion, the gifts of nature, in their most artificial shapes and luxurious profusion and diversity, from all quarters of the earth, are, it is undeniable, by its means brought even to our doors, and we rejoice in them.

9

Useful Knowledge then, I grant, has done its work; and Liberal Knowledge as certainly has not done its work — supposing, that is, as the objectors assume, its direct end, like Religious Knowledge, is to make men better; but this I will not for an instant allow, and unless I allow it, those objectors have said nothing to the purpose. I admit, rather I maintain, what they have been urging, for I

consider Knowledge to have its end in itself. For all its friends, or its enemies, may say, I insist upon it, that it is as real a mistake to burden it with virtue or religion as with the mechanical arts. Its direct business is not to steel the soul against temptation, or to console it in affliction, any more than to set the loom in motion, or to direct the steam carriage; be it ever so much the means or the condition of both material and moral advancement, still, taken by and in itself, it as little mends our hearts as it improves our temporal circumstances. And if its eulogists claim for it such a power, they commit the very same kind of encroachment on a province not their own as the political economist who should maintain that his science educated him for casuistry or diplomacy. Knowledge is one thing, virtue is another; good sense is not conscience, refinement is not humility, nor is largeness and justness of view faith. Philosophy, however enlightened, however profound, gives no command over the passions, no influential motives, no vivifying principles. Liberal Education makes not the Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman, it is well to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life; — these are the connatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of a University; I am advocating, I shall illustrate and insist upon them; but still, I repeat, they are no guarantee for sanctity or even for conscientiousness, they may attach to the man of the world, to the profligate, to the heartless — pleasant, alas, and attractive as he shows when decked out in them. Taken by themselves, they do but seem to be what they are not; they look like virtue at a distance, but they are detected by close observers, and on the long run; and hence it is that they are popularly accused of pretence and hypocrisy, not, I repeat, from their own fault, but because their professors and their admirers persist in taking them for what they are not, and are officious in arrogating for them a praise to which they have no claim. Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against these giants, the passion and the pride of man.

Surely we are not driven to theories of this kind in order to vindicate the value and

¹ *De Augment.* IV, 2. See Macaulay's Essay. (Newman's note.)

² *Fouqué's Unknown Patient.* (Newman's note.)

dignity of Liberal Knowledge. Surely the real grounds on which its pretensions rest are not so very subtle or abstruse, so very strange or improbable. Surely it is very intelligible to say, and that is what I say here, that Liberal Education, viewed in itself, is simply the cultivation of the intellect as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence. Every thing has its own perfection, be it higher or lower in the scale of things; and the perfection of one is not the perfection of another. Things animate, inanimate, visible, invisible, all are good in their kind, and have a *best* of themselves, which is an object of pursuit. Why do you take such pains with your garden or your park? You see to your walks and turf and shrubberies; to your trees and drives; not as if you meant to make an orchard of the one, or corn or pasture land of the other, but because there is a special beauty in all that is goodly in wood, water, plain, and slope, brought all together by art into one shape, and grouped into one whole. Your cities are beautiful, your palaces, your public buildings, your territorial mansions, your churches; and their beauty leads to nothing beyond itself. There is a physical beauty and a moral: there is a beauty of person, there is a beauty of our moral being, which is natural virtue; and in like manner there is a beauty, there is a perfection, of the intellect. There is an ideal perfection in these various subject-matters, towards which individual instances are seen to rise, and which are the standards for all instances whatever. The Greek divinities and demigods, as the statuary has molded them, with their symmetry of figure, and their high forehead and their regular features, are the perfection of physical beauty. The heroes, of whom history tells, Alexander, or Cæsar, or Scipio, or Saladin, are the representatives of that magnanimity or self-mastery which is the great-

ness of human nature. Christianity too has its heroes, and in the supernatural order, and we call them Saints. The artist puts before him beauty of feature and form; the poet, beauty of mind; the preacher, the beauty of grace: then intellect too, I repeat, has its beauty, and it has those who aim at it. To open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know, and to digest, master, rule, and use its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties, application, flexibility, method, critical exactness, sagacity, resource, address, eloquent expression, is an object as intelligible (for here we are inquiring, not what the object of a Liberal Education is worth, nor what use the Church makes of it, but what it is in itself), I say, an object as intelligible as the cultivation of virtue, while, at the same time, it is absolutely distinct from it.

IO

This indeed is but a temporal object, and a transitory possession: but so are other things in themselves which we make much of and pursue. The moralist will tell us that man, in all his functions, is but a flower which blossoms and fades, except so far as a higher principle breathes upon him, and makes him and what he is immortal. Body and mind are carried on into an eternal state of being by the gifts of Divine Munificence; but at first they do but fail in a failing world; and if the powers of intellect decay, the powers of the body have decayed before them, and, as an Hospital or an Almshouse, though its end be ephemeral, may be sanctified to the service of religion, so surely may a University, even were it nothing more than I have as yet described it. We attain to heaven by using this world well, though it is to pass away; we perfect our nature, not by undoing it, but by adding to it what is more than nature, and directing it towards aims higher than its own.

ALFRED TENNYSON (1809-1892)

Alfred Tennyson was born August 6, 1809, in Somersby, in Lincolnshire, where his father was rector. He attended the village school at Louth, which he disliked, leaving to continue his studies under his father at home, and writing much verse, largely under the influence of Byron. In 1826 he and his brother Charles, with a few contributions from Frederick, published *Poems by Two Brothers*; and two years later together they entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Here Tennyson became a member of a group nicknamed, because of their moral earnestness, "The Apostles," among whom were his closest friend Arthur Hallam, son of the historian, Spedding, the Bacon scholar, and Milnes, later Lord Houghton, the biographer of Keats. Thackeray and Edward Fitzgerald, both in Cambridge at the time, were not members. In 1829 Tennyson won

the Chancellor's Medal with a poem on Timbuctoo; in 1830 he published *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*; and the next year, because of his father's illness, he left the university without a degree. In 1832 he produced a volume of *Poems*, which was attacked by most of the reviewers, especially Lockhart in the *Quarterly*. In the following year Tennyson was further depressed by the sudden death of Hallam, who was engaged to his sister. For ten years he published nothing. Whatever the causes, these were years of doubt, introspection, pain. In 1837 he moved the family — now in his charge after his two elder brothers left home — from Somersby to Epping, near London. In spite of the companionship of most of the prominent writers in town, Tennyson remained restless and sensitive. Gradually the call of the sea and the moors of Lincolnshire, the yearning for adventure and dangerous freedom, were stilled, and the desire for comfort, physical and moral, for peace and faith and certainty, became dominant in him.

The publication in 1842 of *Poems* brought Tennyson genuine recognition, and, four years later, a small pension. In 1847 appeared *The Princess*; and in 1850 occurred three events which determined largely the course of his future life: his marriage to Emily Sellwood, to whom he had been engaged for over a dozen years; the publication of *In Memoriam*; and his appointment as Poet Laureate to succeed Wordsworth. From now until his death, Tennyson is the spokesman and singer of Victorian England, voicing its ideals and feelings.

In 1853 he acquired a house at Farringford on the Isle of Wight, where he was a distant neighbor, and warm admirer, of Her Majesty the Queen at Osborne. In 1852 appeared the splendid *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, in 1854 *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, in 1855 *Maud*, in 1859 the first *Idylls of the King*, in 1864 *Enoch Arden*. In 1869 he built Aldworth, a Gothic structure, in Surrey, near the border of Sussex. This and Farringford were his two homes until his death. In 1875 he began a series of poetic plays, most striking of which were *Queen Mary*, 1875; *Harold*, 1876; and *Becket*, 1884 — the "trilogy of England." In the latter year Tennyson was made a baron. Although much hurt by the death, in 1886, of Lionel, his younger son, and by the passing, to use his own words, "of the old reverence and chivalrous feeling in the world," he continued working to the end. He died October 6, 1892, and was given a public funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Tennyson surpassed in popularity all other Victorian poets. To-day the inevitable reaction has set in, and he is called, by Chesterton, "the exquisitely ornamental extinguisher on the flame of the first revolutionary poets." In many of his poems he is cautious and complacently didactic, expressing commonplace formulæ sentimentally in verses that nearly always, however, exhibit skill and polish. As a lyric poet Tennyson is greatest, and as such, at his best, is second to no writer in English. His supreme lyrics, as those in *Maud*, *In Memoriam*, and *The Princess*, are a perfect blending of emotional impulse and exquisite form.

Tennyson's tragedy is that in the complex and bitter fight between theory and fact, the old and the new, which is at the bottom of Victorianism, he too often turned to compromise. He remains a monument of a great period, an era regarded by many as "the golden age of missed opportunities." But it cannot be forgotten that "to perplexed and anxious minds he brought complete intellectual and moral relief" (Nicolson), and still does.

The best one-volume editions are Macmillan's, and the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company). The most recent study of Tennyson is Harold Nicolson's stimulating analysis and summary (Houghton Mifflin Company). There are good commentaries by Waugh, S. Brooke, and others. The official biography has been written by his son Hallam (Macmillan).

THE POET

This poem, written while Tennyson was still an undergraduate, shows how early he was conscious of his mission as a poet.

The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of
scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and
ill, 5
He saw thro' his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay; with echoing feet he threaded
The secretest walks of fame: 10
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were
headed
And winged with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver
tongue,
And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe ¹ unto Caucasus they sung, 15
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
Them earthward till they lit;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,
The fruitful wit 20

i Gibraltar.

Cleaving took root, and springing forth anew
 Where'er they fell, behold,
 Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
 A flower all gold,

And bravely furnished all abroad to fling 25
 The winged shafts of truth,
 To throng with stately blooms the breathing
 spring
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with
 beams,
 Tho' one did fling the fire; 30
 Heaven flowed upon the soul in many dreams
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
 world
 Like any great garden showed,
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark up-
 curled, 35
 Rare sunrise flowed.

And Freedom reared in that august sunrise
 Her beautiful bold brow,
 When rites and forms before his burning eyes
 Melted like snow. 40

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
 Sunned by those orient skies;
 But round about the circles of the globes
 Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in
 flame 45

WISDOM, a name to shake
 All evil dreams of power — a sacred name.
 And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
 And as the lightning to the thunder 50
 Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
 Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No
 sword

Of wrath her right arm whirled,
 But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*
 word 55

She shook the world.

Pub. 1830.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

Tennyson here tells the story of Launcelot
 and Elaine very simply, but against a mystical
 background. The Lady of Shalott emerges

from her world of shadows into the world of
 reality through her interest in Launcelot. The
 form Shalott, for the English Astolat, is prob-
 ably from the Italian Scalotta (French, Esca-
 lot).

PART I

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-towered Camelot; 5
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver, 10
 Little breezes duck and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers, 15
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
 Slide the heavy barges trailed 20
 By slow horses; and unhailed
 The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
 Skimming down to Camelot:
 But who hath seen her wave her hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand? 25
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly 30
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to towered Camelot;
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy 35
 Lady of Shalott."

PART 2

There she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colors gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay 40
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott. 45

1 King Arthur's city.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot; 50
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad, 55
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue 60
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights, 65
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed: 70
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART 3

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves, 75
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A redcross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field, 80
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.-
The bridle bells rang merrily 85
As he rode down to Camelot;
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott. 90

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot;
As often thro' the purple night, 96

Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed; 100
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river 105
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room, 110
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side; 115
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART 4

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining 120
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote 125
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse —
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance —
With a glassy countenance 130
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott. 135

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right —
The leaves upon her falling light —
Thro' the noises of the night 140
She floated down to Camelot;
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy, 145
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,

And her eyes were darkened wholly,
 Turned to towered Camelot;
 For ere she reached upon the tide 150
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
 By garden-wall and gallery, 155
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 A corse between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharfs they came,
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame, 160
 And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
 And in the lighted palace near
 Died the sound of royal cheer; 165
 And they crossed themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
 But Lancelot mused a little space;
 He said, "She has a lovely face;
 God in his mercy lend her grace, 170
 The Lady of Shalott."

Pub. 1832.

ÆNONE

The theme of the poem is the tragic sorrow of Ænone after she was deserted by Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy.

There lies a vale in Ida,¹ lovelier
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
 The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to

pine,
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
 roars

The long brook falling thro' the cloven ravine
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus² 10
 Stands up and takes the morning; but in
 front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
 Troas³ and Ilion's⁴ columned citadel,
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
 Mournful Ænone, wandering forlorn 15
 Of Paris, once her playmate⁵ on the hills.

¹ A mountain range near Troy.

² One of the peaks of Ida

³ The territory in Asia Minor where Troy is located.

⁴ Troy's.

⁵ When Paris was a shepherd, after he had been abandoned by his mother, who feared that he would cause the downfall of Troy.

Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her
 neck
 Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.
 She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
 Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-
 shade 20
 Sloped downward to her seat from the upper
 cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 For now the noonday quiet holds the hill;
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass; 25
 The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
 The purple flowers droop, the golden bee
 Is lily-cradled; I alone awake. 30
 My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
 My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
 And I am all awearied of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O
 Caves 35
 That house the cold crowned snake! O
 mountain brooks,
 I am the daughter of a River-God,
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,¹ 40
 A cloud that gathered shape: for it may be
 That, while I speak of it, a little while
 My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 45
 I waited underneath the dawning hills,
 Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine.
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horned,
 white-hooved, 50
 Came up from reedy Simois² all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Far-off the torrent called me from the cleft;
 Far up the solitary morning smote
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
 dropt eyes 55
 I sat alone; white-breasted like a star
 Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
 Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny
 hair
 Clustered about his temples like a God's;

¹ The walls of Troy, according to one legend, rose to Apollo's music.

² A brook on Mt. Ida.

And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow
brightens 60
When the wind blows the foam, and all my
heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he
came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white
palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold, 65
That smelt ambrosially, and while I looked
And listened, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.

"My own Cēnone,
Beautiful-browed Cēnone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind in-
graven 70
"For the most fair," would seem to award it
thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread ¹ haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die. 75
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged ² in the halls of Peleus ³; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere
due; 80
But light-foot Iris ⁴ brought it yester-eye,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herē ⁵ comes to-day,
Pallas ⁶ and Aphrodite, ⁷ claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the
cave 85
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnight; one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides 91
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they
came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded
bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel, 95
Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon

Ran riot, garland in the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and
thro'. 100

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops, a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and
leaned 103
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her ¹ to whom
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestioned, overflowing revenue 110
Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a
vale
And river-sundered champaign clothed with
corn,
Or labored mines undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
From many an inland town and haven
large, 115
Mast-thronged beneath her shadowing cita-
del
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of
power,
'Which in all action is the end of all; 120
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom — from all neighbor
crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from
me,
From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee
king-born, 125
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in
power
Only, are likest gods, who have attained
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss 130
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of
power
Flattered his spirit; but Pallas where she
stood 135
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
1 Juno.

1 mountain-nymph.

2 At the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis.

3 The father of Achilles.

4 The Rainbow, messenger of the Gods.

5 Juno.

6 Minerva.

7 Venus.

Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek 140
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.¹

Yet not for power, (power of herself
Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear; 146
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.’

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Again she said: ‘I woo thee not with gifts. 150
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed 154
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbiased by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God’s,
To push thee forward thro’ a life of shocks, 160
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled thro’ all experiences, pure law,
Commensure perfect freedom.’

“Here she ceased,
And Paris pondered, and I cried, ‘O Paris, 165
Give it to Pallas!’ but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

“O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian² Aphrodite beautiful, 170
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian²
wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder; from the violets her light
foot 175
Shone rosy-white, and o’er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

“Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes, 180
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whispered in his ear, ‘I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.’³

¹ Much of Tennyson’s philosophy is incorporated in this speech of Pallas’s.

² Idalium and Paphos were towns in Cyprus famous for their worship of Venus.

³ Helen.

She spoke and laughed; I shut my sight for fear:

But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm, 185

And I beheld great Herè’s angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die. 190

“Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by a wild and wanton pard,¹
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouched fawning in the weed. Most loving
is she? 197

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
prest

Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains 201
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy
ledge 205

High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Fostered the callow eaglet — from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark
morn

The panther’s roar came muffled, while I sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more 211
Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist
Sweep thro’ them; never see them overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling
stars. 215

“O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the
glens,

Of the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
The Abominable,² that uninvited came 220
Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak
my mind
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

“O mother, hear me yet before I die. 226
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,

¹ leopard.

² Eris, the goddess of strife.

In this green valley, under this green hill,
 Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
 Sealed it with kisses? watered it with tears?
 O happy tears, and how unlike to these! 231
 O happy heaven, how canst thou see my
 face?

O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
 weight?

O death, death, death, thou ever-floating
 cloud,

There are enough unhappy on this earth, 235
 Pass by the happy souls, that love to live;
 I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
 And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
 Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
 Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die. 240

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
 Do shape themselves within me, more and
 more,

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
 Dead sounds at night come from the inmost
 hills, 245

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
 My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
 Conjectures of the features of her child
 Ere it is born. Her child! — a shudder comes
 Across me: never child be born of me, 250
 Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
 Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
 Walking the cold and starless road of death
 Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love 256
 With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
 Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
 Talk with the wild Cassandra,¹ for she says
 A fire dances before her, and a sound 260
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.²
 What this may be I know not, but I know
 That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
 All earth and air seem only burning fire."

Pub. 1832.

THE PALACE OF ART

In this poem, Tennyson presents symbolically, but with emotion, the torment of an artist as he meditates upon the question of art and life. The poem concludes with the hope of a nobler art devoted to the service of humanity.

I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.

¹ The daughter of Priam, who could foretell events but who never was believed.

² Cassandra predicted the Trojan war and the fall of Troy.

I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,
 Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnished
 brass, 5

I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
 From level meadow-bases of deep grass
 Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair. 10
 My soul would live alone unto herself
 In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round,"
 I said,
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast
 shade 15
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
 In this great mansion, that is built for me,
 So royal-rich and wide." 20

Four courts I made, East, West and South
 and North,

In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran a
 row 25
 Of cloisters, branched like mighty woods,
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods;

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge¹ to distant lands,
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the
 sky 31
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one
 swell

Across the mountain streamed below
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell 35
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seemed
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odor steamed
 From out a golden cup. 40

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,

¹ horizon.

While this great bow will waver in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise?" 44

For that sweet incense rose and never failed,
And, while day sank or mounted higher,
The light aerial gallery, golden-railed,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stained and
traced,
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires 50
From shadowed grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did
pass, 55
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace
stood,
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul. 60

For some were hung with arras green and blue,
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puffed cheek the belted hunter
blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seemed all dark and red — a tract of
sand, 65
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One showed an iron coast and angry waves.
You seemed to hear them climb and fall 70
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing
caves,
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low, 75
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,¹
And hoary² to the wind. 80

And one, a foreground black with stones and
slags;

Beyond, a line of heights; and higher
All barred with long white cloud the scornful
crag;
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home — gray twilight
poured 85
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep — all things in order
stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair.
As fit for every mood of mind, 90
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
there,
Not less than truth designed.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx 95
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-walled city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;¹
An angel looked at her. 100

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,
A group of Houris² bowed to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son³ 105
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watched by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw 110
The wood-nymph,⁴ stayed the Ausonian
king⁵ to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrailed,⁶
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama⁷ slowly sailed
A summer fanned with spice. 116

Or sweet Europa's⁸ mantle blew unclasped,
From off her shoulder backward borne;

¹ The patron saint of music.

² Mohammed's beautiful attendants.

³ King Arthur.

⁴ Egeria.

⁵ Numa Pompilius, second king of Rome, taught by Egeria.

⁶ indented.

⁷ The Cupid of Hindu mythology.

⁸ Zeus, in the shape of a bull, carried Europa away on his back.

¹ olives.

² Because of the whitish underside of the leaves.

From one hand drooped a crocus; one hand
grasped
The mild bull's golden horn. 120

Or else flushed Ganymede,¹ his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillared town.

Nor these alone: but every legend fair 125
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, designed.

Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver sound;
And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung 131
The royal daïs round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild;
And there the world-worn Dante grasped his
song, 135
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father ² of the rest;
A million wrinkles carved his skin;
A hundred winters snowed upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin. 140

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set,
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely planned 145
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toiled onward, pricked with goods and
stings; 150
Here played, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man
declined, 155
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod; and those great bells
Began to chime. She took her throne;

¹ The cupbearer of the Gods, brought to Zeus by an eagle.

² Homer.

She sat betwixt the shining oriels,
To sing her songs alone. 160

And thro' the topmost oriels' colored flame
Two godlike faces gazed below;
Plato the wise, and large-browed Verulam,¹
The first of those who know.

And all those names that in their motion
were 165
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazoned
fair
In diverse raiment strange;

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald,
blue,
Flushed in her temples and her eyes, 170
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,²
drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echoed song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone; 176

Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,
Lord of the senses five; 180

Communing with herself: "All these are
mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me." She — when young night
divine
Crowned dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils — 185
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,³
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollowed moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapt her hands and
cried,
"I marvel if my still delight 190
In this great house so royal-rich and wide
Be flattered to the height.

"O all things fair to sate my various eyes!
O shapes and hues that please me well!
O silent faces of the Great and Wise, 195
My Gods, with whom I dwell!

¹ Bacon.

² The statue near Thebes from which, it was said, music issued at dawn.

³ garlands.

"O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of
swine

That range on yonder plain. 200

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep."¹

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
And of the rising from the dead, 206
As hers by right of full-accomplished Fate;
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl. 210
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flashed thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne. 216

And so she throve and prospered; so three years
She prospered; on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.² 220

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turned
her sight 225

The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote "Mene, mene,"³ and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born 230
Scorn of herself; again, from out that mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of strength," she
said,

"My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were
laid 235
Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares

On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of
blood,
And horrible nightmares, 240

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
And, with dim fretted¹ foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she
came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light 245
Or power of movement, seemed my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal;

A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand,
Left on the shore, that hears all night 250
The plunging seas draw backward from the
land
Their moon-led waters white;

A star that with the choral starry dance
Joined not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance 255
Rolled round by one fixed law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curled.
"No voice," she shrieked in that lone hall,
"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this
world;
One deep, deep silence all!" 260

She, mouldering with the dull earth's mould-
ering sod,
Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally, 265
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time, 270
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seemed to hear the dully sound 275
Of human footsteps fall:

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea; 280

¹ worm-eaten.

¹ Mark v, 13. ² Acts xii, 21-23.

³ At Belshazzar's feast; see Daniel v, 25.

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, "I have
found
A new land, but I die."

She howled aloud, "I am on fire within. 285
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,
She threw her royal robes away. 290
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,
"Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that
are
So lightly, beautifully built;
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt." 296
Pub. 1832.

THE LOTOS-EATERS

This poem has been widely praised for the manner in which the sound of the lines echoes the sense. Compare the opening stanzas with *The Faerie Queene* and with *The Castle of Indolence*.

The story of the poem is from the *Odyssey*.

"Courage!" he¹ said, and pointed toward
the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward
soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did
swoon, 5
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And like a downward smoke, the slender
stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did
seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward
smoke, 10
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did
go;
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows
broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land; far off, three mountain-
tops, 15
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,

¹ Ulysses.

Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with
showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven
copse.

The charmed sunset lingered low adown
In the red West; thro' mountain clefts the
dale 20
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Bordered with palm, and many a winding
vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale;¹
A land where all things always seemed the
same!
And round about the keel with faces pale, 25
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they
gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them 30
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seemed, yet all awake, 35
And music in his ears his beating heart did
make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but ever-
more 40
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no
more;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer
roam." 45

CHORIC SONG

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies, 50
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from
the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
¹ aromatic sedge.

And in the stream the long-leaved flowers
weep, 55
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs
in sleep.

2

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?

All things have rest: why should we toil
alone, 60

We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings, 65
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!" —

Why should we only toil, the roof and crown
of things?

3

Lo! in the middle of the wood, 70

The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud

With winds upon the branch, and there

Grows green and broad, and takes no care,

Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon

Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow 75

Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo! sweetened with the summer light,

The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.

All its allotted length of days 80

The flower ripens in its place,

Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no
toil,

Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

4

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea. 85

Death is the end of life; ah, why

Should life all labor be?

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,

And in a little while our lips are dumb.

Let us alone. What is it that will last? 90

All things are taken from us, and become

Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.

Let us alone. What pleasure can we have

To war with evil? Is there any peace

In ever climbing up the climbing wave? 95

All things have rest, and ripen toward the
grave

In silence — ripen, fall and cease:

Give us long rest or death, dark death, or
dreamful ease.

5

How sweet it were, hearing the downward
stream,

With half-shut eyes ever to seem 100

Falling asleep in a half-dream!

To dream and dream, like yonder amber
light,

Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the
height;

To hear each other's whispered speech;

Eating the Lotos day by day, 105

To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,

And tender curving lines of creamy spray;

To lend our hearts and spirits wholly

To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;

To muse and brood and live again in mem-
ory, 110

With those old faces of our infancy

Heaped over with a mound of grass,

Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn
of brass!

6

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,

And dear the last embraces of our wives 115

And their warm tears; but all hath suffered
change;

For surely now our household hearths are
cold,

Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,

And we should come like ghosts to trouble
joy.

Or else the island princes over-bold 120

Have eat our substance, and the minstrel
sings

Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,

And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.

Is there confusion in the little isle?

Let what is broken so remain. 125

The Gods are hard to reconcile;

'Tis hard to settle order once again.

There is confusion worse than death,

Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,

Long labour unto aged breath, 130

Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars

And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-
stars.

7

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing
lowly)

With half-dropt eyelids still, 135

Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river drawing
slowly

His waters from the purple hill —

To hear the dewy echoes calling

From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined
vine —
To watch the emerald-colored water falling¹⁴⁰
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath di-
vine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling
brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out be-
neath the pine.

8

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak,¹⁴⁵
The Lotos blows by every winding creek;
All day the wind breathes low with mellower
tone;
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow
Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of mo-
tion we,¹⁵⁰
Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when
the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his
foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an
equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie re-
clined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of
mankind.¹⁵⁵
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts
are hurled
Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curled
Round their golden houses, girdled with the
gleaming world;
Where they smile in secret, looking over
wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake,
roaring deeps and fiery sands,¹⁶⁰
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in
a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient
tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words
are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that
cleave the soil,¹⁶⁵
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with en-
during toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine
and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer — some,
'tis whispered — down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian
valleys dwell,

Resting weary limbs at last on beds of aspho-
del.¹⁷⁰
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than
toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and
wave and oar;
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not
wander more.

Pub. 1832.

THE EPIC

This poem is the introduction to the *Morte d'Arthur* which follows.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas eve, —
The game of forfeits done — the girls all
kissed
Beneath the sacred bush and past away —
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
The host, and I sat round the wassail-
bowl,⁵
Then half-way ebbed; and there we held a
talk,
How all the old honor from Christmas gone,
Or gone or dwindled down to some odd games
In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
With cutting eights that day upon the
pond,¹⁰
Where, three times slipping from the outer
edge,
I bumped the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
Now harping on the church-commissioners,
Now hawking at geology and schism;¹⁶
Until I woke, and found him settled down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world: "at home was little
left,
And none abroad; there was no anchor, none,
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt his
hand²¹
On Everard's shoulder, with "I hold by him."
"And I," quoth Everard, "by the wassail-
bowl!"
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your gift that
way
At college; but another which you had —²⁵
I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
What came of that?" "You know," said
Frank, "he burnt
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve
books" —
And then to me demanding why: "O, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said, or
else³⁰
Something so said 'twas nothing — that a
truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day;
 God knows; he has a mint of reasons; ask.
 It pleased *me* well enough." "Nay, nay,"
 said Hall,

"Why take the style of those heroic times?
 For nature brings not back the mastodon, ³⁶
 Nor we those times; and why should any man
 Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
 Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
 Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt."

"But I," ⁴⁰
 Said Francis, "picked the eleventh from this
 hearth,

And have it; keep a thing, its use will come.
 I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
 He laughed, and I, though sleepy, like a
 horse

That hears the corn-bin open, pricked my
 ears; ⁴⁵

For I remembered Everard's college fame
 When we were Freshmen. Then at my re-
 quest

He brought it; and the poet, little urged,
 But with some prelude of disparagement,
 Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
 Deep-chested music, and to this result. ⁵¹

Pub. 1842.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

This account of Arthur's death, incorporated twenty-five years later, with the omission of one line, into "The Passing of Arthur" (lines 170-440) of the *Idylls of the King*, is based on Malory *xxi*, 5; but Tennyson, as usual when he treats a classical or medieval subject, tinges the poem with modern, Christian thought and emotion. For the chapter of Malory, see page 146.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
 Among the mountains by the winter sea,
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
 Had fallen in Lyonness about their lord,
 King Arthur; then, because his wound was
 deep, ⁵

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
 On one side lay the Ocean and on one ¹¹
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
 "The sequel of to-day unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a
 sleep ¹⁶

They sleep — the men I loved. I think that
 we

Shall never more, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
 Walking about the gardens and the halls ²⁰
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
 I perish by this people which I made, —
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
 again

To rule once more — but let what will be, be,
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm ²⁵
 That without help I cannot last till morn.
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
 Which was my pride; for thou rememberest
 how

In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake, ³⁰
 Clothed in white samite,¹ mystic, wonderful,
 Holding the sword — and how I rowed across
 And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known. ³⁵
 But now delay not; take Excalibur,
 And fling him far into the middle mere;
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly² bring me
 word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
 thus, ⁴⁰

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
 A little thing may harm a wounded man.
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
 word."

So saying, from the ruined shrine he
 stepped ⁴⁵

And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
 sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, step-
 ping down

By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock, ⁵⁰
 Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran
 forth

And sparkled keen with frost against the
 hilt; ⁵⁵

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
 sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
 Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
 That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift mind,
 In act to throw; but at the last it seemed ⁶¹
 Better to leave Excalibur concealed
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,

1 a heavy silk.

2 quickly.

That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded
king. 65

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I
gave?"

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds, 70
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and
pale:

"Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight; 75

For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief¹ and dear, and do the
thing 80

I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me
word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt, 85

How curiously and strangely chased, he
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud:
"And if indeed I cast the brand away,

Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many
men. 91

What good should follow this, if this were
done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king de-
mand 95

An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he

does.

What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty

kings, 101

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the lake;
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the

deeps 105
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'

¹ beloved.

So might some old man speak in the after-
time

To all the people, winning reverence;
But now much honor and much fame were
lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own con-
ceit, 110

And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing
heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag, 116

And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in
wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me! 120

Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widowed of the power in his eye

That bowed the will. I see thee what thou
art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all, 125

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious
hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee

hence; 130
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,

I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly,

plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutched the

sword, 135
And strongly wheeled and threw it. The

great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the

moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled

in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles² of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea. 141

So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur;
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished

him 145
Three times, and drew him under in the

mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

¹ imagining.

² i.e., icebergs.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker
breath:
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out; what is it thou hast heard, or
seen?" 150

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the
gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men, 155
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling
him;

But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished
him 160

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing
hard:

"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were
gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my
weight,

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear 165
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere 170

Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not
words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one
knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid
hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of
tombs. 175

But, as he walked, King Arthur panted
hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the
King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick,
quick!

I fear it is too late, and I shall die." 180
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to
ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he
walked,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a
goad. 185

Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he
based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
heels — 190

And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky
barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were
ware 195

That all the decks were dense with stately
forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream —
by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold — and
from them rose

A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony 200

Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one
comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the
world.

Then murmured Arthur, "Place me in the
barge,"

And to the barge they came. There those
three queens 205

Put forth their hands, and took the king,
and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed
his hands,

And called him by his name, complaining
loud, 210

And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood; for all his face was
white

And colorless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing
east;

And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with
drops 215

Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls —
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne — were parched
with dust;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed
his lips. 220

So like a shattered column lay the king;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings. 225

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:

"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?

Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?

For now I see the true old times are dead,

When every morning brought a noble
chance, 230

And every chance brought out a noble
knight.

Such times have been not since the light
that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.

But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dis-
solved

Which was an image of the mighty world;

And I, the last, go forth companionless, 236

And the days darken round me, and the
years,

Among new men, strange faces, other
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the
barge:

"The old order changeth, yielding place to
new, 240

And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the
world.

Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?

I have lived my life, and that which I have
done

May He within himself make pure! but
thou, 245

If thou shouldst never see my face again,

Pray for my soul. More things are wrought
by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let
thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and day.

For what are men better than sheep or
goats 250

That nourish a blind life within the brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands of
prayer

Both for themselves and those who call
them friend?

For so the whole round earth is every way

Bound by gold chains about the feet of
God. 255

But now farewell. I am going a long way

With these thou seest — if indeed I go —

(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)

To the island-valley of Avilion;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 260

Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies

Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard
lawns

And bowery hollows crowned with summer
sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and
sail 265

Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the
flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedi-
vere

Revolving many memories, till the hull 270

Looked one black dot against the verge of
dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that
long

Had winked and threatened darkness, flared
and fell;

At which the parson, sent to sleep with
sound, 275

And waked with silence, grunted "Good!"
but we

Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he
read —

Perhaps some modern touches here and
there

Redeemed it from the charge of nothing-
ness —

Or else we loved the man, and prized his
work; 280

I know not; but we sitting, as I said,

The cock crew loud, as at that time of year

The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn.

Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
"There now — that's nothing!" drew a little
back, 285

And drove his heel into the smoldered log,

That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue.

And so to bed, where yet in sleep I seemed

To sail with Arthur under looming shores,

Point after point; till on to dawn, when
dreams 290

Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a
crowd,

There came a bark that, blowing forward,
bore

King Arthur, like a modern gentleman

Of stateliest port; and all the people cried, 295

"Arthur is come again: he cannot die."

Then those that stood upon the hills behind

Repeated — "Come again, and thrice as
fair;"

And, further inland, voices echoed — "Come
With all good things, and war shall be no
more." 300

At this a hundred bells began to peal,

That with the sound I woke, and heard in-
deed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas
morn.

Pub. 1842.

ULYSSES

This excellent poem, obviously a counterpiece to *The Lotos-Eaters*, is Ulysses' soliloquy after returning from his wanderings to his home and wife Penelope. According to the poet's statement, it represents Tennyson's own feelings after the death of Hallam, and his decision to keep on going forward.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren
crag,
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know
not me. 5

I cannot rest from travel; I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with
those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and
when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades * 10
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known, — cities of
men

And manners, climates, councils, govern-
ments,
Myself not least, but honored of them
all, — 15

And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Glams that untravelled world, whose
margin fades 20

For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on
life

Were all too little, and of one to me 25
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard my-
self,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire 30
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

* the constellation.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle, —
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil 35
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent, not to fail 40
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I
mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her
sail;

There gloom the dark, broad seas. My
mariners, 45
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and
thought with me, —

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads, — you and I are
old;

Old age hath yet his honor and his toil. 50
Death closes all; but something ere the
end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs;
the deep 55

Moans round with many voices. Come,
my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60
Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho' 65
We are not now that strength which in old
days

Moved earth and heaven, that which we are,
we are, —

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in
will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. 70

Pub. 1842.

LOCKSLEY HALL

Locksley Hall is a dramatic monologue. It was meant, said Tennyson, to represent youth, — its good side, its deficiencies, and its yearnings. The hero, who is half-minded and impulsive, is disillusioned in love and in the ideals of

the Victorian era. He looks forward to a new age which will bring back to him the eagerness of his youth.

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn;

Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,

Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,

And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,

Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,

Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing a youth sublime

With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;

When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed;

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see,

Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be. —

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;

In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;

In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,

And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,

Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,

As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turned—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs —

All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes —

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong;"

Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands;

Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;

Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,

And her whisper thronged my pulses with the fullness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,

And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!

O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,

Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy? — having known me — to decline

On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his level day by day,

What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art mated
with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have
weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall
have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer
than his horse. 50

What is this? his eyes are heavy; think not
they are glazed with wine.
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take his
hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is
overwrought;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him
with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to
understand — 55
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew
thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the
heart's disgrace,
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a
last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against
the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from
the living truth! 60

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from
honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened
forehead of the fool!

Well — 'tis well that I should bluster! —
Hadst thou less unworthy proved —
Would to God — for I had loved thee more
than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which
bears but bitter fruit? 65
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart
be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such
length of years should come
As the many-wintered crow that leads the
clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records
of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as
I knew her, kind? 70

I remember one that perished; sweetly did
she speak and move;
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at
was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for
the love she bore?
No — she never loved me truly; love is love
for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorned of devils! this is
truth the poet sings, 75
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remember-
ing happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest
thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the
rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art
staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the
shadows rise and fall. 80

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing
to his drunken sleep,
To thy widowed marriage-pillows, to the
tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whis-
pered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ring-
ing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient
kindness on thy pain. 85
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get thee
to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a
tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy
trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest
rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from
the mother's breast. 90

O, the child too clothes the father with a
dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his; it will be worthy
of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy
petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down
a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings
— she herself was not exempt — 95
Truly, she herself had suffered" — Perish in
thy self-contempt!

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy! where-
fore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither
by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting
upon days like these?
Every door is barred with gold, and opens
but to golden keys. 100

Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the
markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy; what is that
which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the
foeman's ground,
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the
winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt
that Honor feels, 105
And the nations do but murmur, snarling
at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that
earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou won-
drous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt
before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the
tumult of my life; 110

Yearning for the large excitement that the
coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves
his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near
and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring
like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone
before him then, 115
Underneath the light he looks at, in among
the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever
reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest of
the things that they shall do.

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye
could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the
wonder that would be; 120

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies
of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and
there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in
the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the
south-wind rushing warm, 125
With the standards of the peoples plunging
thro' the thunder storm;

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and
the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of
the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold
a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in
universal law. 130

So I triumphed, ere my passion sweeping thro'
me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me
with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things
here are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping
on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion,
creeping nigher, 135
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a
slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing
purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with
the process of the suns.¹

What is that to him that reaps not harvest
of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever
like a boy's? 140

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I
linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is
more and more.

¹ with the passing of time.

- Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and
he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the
stillness of his rest.
- Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding
on the bugle-horn, ¹⁴⁵
They to whom my foolish passion were a
target for their scorn.
- Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a
moldered string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have
loved so slight a thing.
- Weakness to be wroth with weakness!
woman's pleasure, woman's pain —
Nature made them blinder motions¹ bounded
in a shallower brain. ¹⁵⁰
- Woman is the lesser man, and all thy pas-
sions, matched with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water
unto wine —
- Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing.
Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my
life began to beat,
- Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father
evil-starred; — ¹⁵⁵
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish
uncle's ward.
- Or to burst all links of habit — there to
wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways
of the day.
- Larger constellations burning, mellow moons
and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster,
knots of Paradise. ¹⁶⁰
- Never comes the trader, never floats an
European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings
the trailer from the crag;
- Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs
the heavy-fruited tree —
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple
spheres of sea.
- There methinks would be enjoyment more
than in this march of mind, ¹⁶⁵
In the steamship, in the railway, in the
thoughts that shake mankind.
- There the passions cramped no longer shall
have scope and breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear
my dusky race.
- Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive,
and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl
their lances in the sun; ¹⁷⁰
- Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the
rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miser-
able books —
- Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know*
my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than
the Christian child.
- I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of
our glorious gains, ¹⁷⁵
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast
with lower pains!
- Mated with a squalid savage — what to me
were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files
of time —
- I that rather held it better men should perish
one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like
Joshua's moon in Ajalon!² ¹⁸⁰
- Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward,
forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the
ringing grooves of change.
- Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into
the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of
Cathay.²
- Mother-Age, — for mine I knew not, — help
me as when life begun; ¹⁸⁵
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the
lightnings, weigh the sun.
- O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit
hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all
my fancy yet.
- Howsoever these things be, a long farewell
to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for
me the roof-tree fall. ¹⁹⁰

¹ impulses.¹ Joshua, x, 12.² China.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening
over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast
a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail,
or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward,
and I go.

Pub. 1842.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

"It was made in a Lincolnshire lane at five
o'clock in the morning between blossoming
hedges." (Tennyson.)

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy, 5
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill; 10
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead 15
Will never come back to me.

Pub. 1842.

SONGS FROM *THE PRINCESS*

These songs, added in later editions of *The Princess*, stand out among the great lyrics in the English language. *The Princess* is Tennyson's long narrative poem dealing with the position of woman in society and, especially, with the holiness of the marriage relation.

I

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go, 5
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon; 10

Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon; 15
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,
sleep.

2

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory. 20
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar 25
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river; 30
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,
dying.

3

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they
mean, 35
Tears from the depth of some divine de-
spair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more. 39

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the under-
world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer
dawns 45
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering
square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no
more. 49

I Note the absence of rhyme in this song.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

4

Home they brought her warrior dead; 55
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry.
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Called him worthy to be loved, 60
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior sept,
Took the face-cloth from the face; 65
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee —
Like summer tempest came her tears —
"Sweet my child, I live for thee." 70

5

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the
sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take
the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more. 75

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee
die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more. 80

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are
sealed;
I strove against the stream and all in vain;
Let the great river take me to the main.
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more. 85

6

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the
white;¹
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font.
The fire-fly wakens; waken thou with me.

¹ This and the next lyric are truly great, — inimitable works of art. Again, the absence of rhyme is remarkable.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a
ghost, 90
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë¹ to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me. 95

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake.
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

7

Come down, O maid, from yonder moun-
tain height;² 100
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd
sang)
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and
cease

To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire; 105
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirited purple of the vats, 110
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the Silver
Horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors. 116
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and
spill 120

Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-
smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in air.
So waste not thou, but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I 125
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees. 130

Pub. 1847-50

¹ Zeus visited Danaë in a shower of Gold when Danaë (mother of Perseus by Zeus) was imprisoned in a tower by her father.

² The scenery in this poem is Swiss; the spirit of the piece, it has been pointed out, is Greek.

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

This poem is Tennyson's great elegy on the death of Arthur Henry Hallam, the poet's close friend at Cambridge. Hallam, who was the son of the well-known historian, was engaged to Tennyson's sister Emily at the time of his death in Vienna in 1833. Between that time and 1850, the year in which *In Memoriam* was published, Tennyson wrote verses expressing the phases of his great grief as this grief was recalled to him. These verses, written in sections, were woven together for publication.

I¹

I held it truth, with him² who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-
stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss.
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with Death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
"Behold the man that loved, and
lost,
But all he was is overworn."

2

Old yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock;
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O, not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom;

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

¹ These stanzas follow the general introduction.

² This reference was not clear even to the poet.

3

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;
A web is woven across the sky;
From out waste places comes a cry,
And murmurs from the dying sun;

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands —
With all her music in her tone,
A hollow echo of my own, —
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,
Embrace her as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
Upon the threshold of the mind?

4

To Sleep I give my powers away;
My will is bondsman to the dark;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail from thy desire,
Who scarcely darest to inquire,
"What is it makes me beat so low?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early years.
Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost!

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
All night below the darkened eyes;
With morning wakes the will, and
cries,
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

5

I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;
But that large grief which these enfold
Is given in outline and no more.

6

One writes, that "other friends remain,"
That "loss is common to the race" —
And common is the commonplace,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain. 80

That loss is common would not make
My own less bitter, rather more.
Too common! Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be, 85
That pledgest now thy gallant son,
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath stilled the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save 89
Thy sailor, — while thy head is bowed,
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
At that last hour to please him well;
Who mused on all I had to tell, 95
And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home;
And ever met him on his way
With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"
Or, "here to-morrow will he come." 100

O, somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
That sittest ranging golden hair;
And glad to find thyself so fair,
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows 105
In expectation of a guest;
And thinking "this will please him
best,"

She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night; 109
And with the thought her color burns;
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turned, the curse
Had fallen, and her future lord
Was drowned in passing thro' the
ford, 115

Or killed in falling from his horse.

O, what to her shall be the end?
And what to me remains of good?
To her, perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me, no second friend. 120

7

Dark house,¹ by which once more I stand
Here in the long unlovely street,
Doors, where my heart was used to
beat
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasped no more — 125
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away
The noise of life begins again, 130
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.

27

I envy not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes 5
His license in the field of time,
Unfettered by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth 10
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost 15
Than never to have loved at all.

28

The time draws near the birth of Christ.²
The moon is hid, the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist. 20

Four voices of four hamlets³ round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between-me and the sound;

Each voice four changes on the wind, 25
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

¹ Hallam's home in London, 67 Wimpole Street.

² This is the first Christmas after Hallam's death.

³ Near Somersby.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
 I almost wished no more to wake, 30
 And that my hold on life would break
 Before I heard those bells again;

But they my troubled spirit rule,
 For they controlled me when a boy;
 They bring me sorrow touched with joy,
 The merry, merry bells of Yule. 36

29

With such compelling cause to grieve
 As daily vexes household peace,
 And chains regret to his decease,
 How dare we keep our Christmas-eve, 40

Which brings no more a welcome guest
 To enrich the threshold of the night
 With showered largess of delight
 In dance and song and game and jest?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs 45
 Entwine the cold baptismal font,
 Make one wreath more for Use and
 Wont,
 That guard the portals of the house;

Old sisters of a day gone by,
 Gray nurses, loving nothing new — 50
 Why should they miss their yearly due
 Before their time? They too will die.

30

With trembling fingers did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas hearth;
 A rainy cloud possessed the earth, 55
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
 We gamboled, making vain pretence
 Of gladness, with an awful sense
 Of one mute Shadow watching all. 60

We paused: the winds were in the beech;
 We heard them sweep the winter land;
 And in a circle hand-in-hand
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang; 65
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
 A merry song we sang with him
 Last year; impetuously we sang.

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept
 Upon us: surely rest is meet. 70
 "They rest," we said, "their sleep is
 sweet,"
 And silence followed, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
 Once more we sang: "They do not die
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy, 75
 Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
 With gathered power, yet the same,
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil." 80

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
 Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
 O Father, touch the east, and light
 The light that shone when Hope was born.

50

Be near me when my light is low,
 When the blood creeps, and the nerves
 prick
 And tingle; and the heart is sick,
 And all the wheels of being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame 5
 Is racked with pangs that conquer trust;
 And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
 And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
 And men the flies of latter spring, 10
 That lay their eggs, and sting and sing
 And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
 To point the term of human strife,
 And on the low dark verge of life 15
 The twilight of eternal day.

51

Do we indeed desire the dead
 Should still be near us at our side?
 Is there no baseness we would hide?
 No inner vileness that we dread? 20

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
 I had such reverence for his blame,
 See with clear eye some hidden shame
 And I be lessened in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue. 25
 Shall love be blamed for want of faith?
 There must be wisdom with great Death;
 The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall;
 Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours 30
 With larger other eyes than ours,
 To make allowance for us all.

52
I cannot love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the thing beloved;
My words are only words, and moved 35
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song,"
The Spirit of true love replied;
"Thou canst not move me from thy side,
Nor human frailty do me wrong. 40

"What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears?
What record? not the sinless years¹
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue;

"So fret not, like an idle girl, 45
That life is dashed with flecks of sin.
Abide; thy wealth is gathered in,
When Time hath Sundered shell from pearl."

53
How many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys, 50
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
Who wears his manhood hale and green;

And dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had grown 55
The grain by which a man may live?

Oh, if we held the doctrine sound
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a truth
To those that eddy round and round? 60

Hold thou the good, define it well;
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark, and be
Procuress to the Lords of Hell.

54
O, yet we trust that somehow good 65
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed, 70
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shriveled in a fruitless fire, 75
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last — far off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring. 80

So runs my dream; but what am I?
An infant crying in the night;
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry.

55
The wish, that of the living whole 85
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams? 90
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds 95
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God, 100

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

77
What hope is here for modern rhyme
To him who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
Foreshortened in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain 5
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that tells 10
A grief, then changed to something
else,
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darkened ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than fame, 15
To utter love more sweet than praise.

¹ Christ's.

78

Again at Christmas¹ did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas hearth;
 The silent snow possessed the earth,
 And calmly² fell our Christmas-eve. 20

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
 No wing of wind the region swept,
 But over all things brooding slept
 The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind, 25
 Again our ancient games had place,
 The mimic picture's breathing grace,
 And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who showed a token of distress?
 No single tear, no type of pain — 30
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
 No — mixt with all this mystic frame,
 Her deep relations are the same, 35
 But with long use her tears are dry.

96

You³ say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue
 eyes
 Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew 5
 In many a subtle question versed,
 Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true;

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out. 10
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
 He would not make his judgement
 blind,
 He faced the spectres of the mind 15
 And laid them; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own,
 And Power was with him in the night,
 Which makes the darkness and the
 light,
 And dwells not in the light alone, 20

¹ The second Christmas after Hallam's death.

² The first Christmas fell "sadly."

³ This may be Emily Sellwood, to whom Tennyson was engaged. They were married in 1850.

But in the darkness and the cloud,
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,
 While Israel made their gods of gold,
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

104

The time draws near the birth of Christ;¹
 The moon is hid, the night is still;
 A single² church below the hill
 Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below, 5
 That wakens at this hour of rest
 A single murmur in the breast,
 That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
 In lands where not a memory strays, 10
 Nor landmark breathes of other days,
 But all is new unhallowed ground.

105

To-night ungathered let us leave
 This laurel, let this holly stand:
 We live within the stranger's land, 15
 And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

Our father's dust³ is left alone
 And silent under other snows:
 There in due time the woodbine blows,
 The violet comes, but we are gone. 20

No more shall wayward grief abuse
 The genial hour with mask and mime;
 For change of place, like growth of time,
 Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast, 25
 By which our lives are chiefly proved,
 A little spare the night I loved,
 And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
 Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm; 30
 For who would keep an ancient form
 Through which the spirit breathes no more?

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;
 Nor harp be touched, nor flute be blown;
 No dance, no motion, save alone 35
 What lightens in the lucid East

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
 Long sleeps the summer in the seed;
 Run out your measured arcs, and lead
 The closing cycle rich in good. 40

¹ The third Christmas after Hallam's death.

² i.e., they are no longer at Somersby.

³ Tennyson's father died in March, 1833, at Somersby.

106

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
 The flying cloud, the frosty light:
 The year is dying in the night;
 Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
 The year is going, let him go;
 Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
 For those that here we see no more;
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
 And ancient forms of party strife;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

116

Is it, then, regret for buried time
 That keener in sweet April wakes,
 And meets the year, and gives and takes
 The colors of the crescent prime?¹

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
 The life re-orient out of dust,
 Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
 In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine
 Upon me, while I muse alone,
 And that dear voice, I once have known,
 Still speak to me of me and mine.

¹ springtime.

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
 For days of happy commune dead,
 Less yearning for the friendship fled
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

117

O days and hours, your work is this,
 To hold me from my proper place,
 A little while from his embrace,
 For fuller gain of after bliss;

That out of distance might ensue
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet,
 And unto meeting, when we meet,
 Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
 And every span of shade that steals,
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,¹
 And all the courses of the suns.

118²

Contemplate all this work of Time,
 The giant laboring in his youth;
 Nor dream of human love and truth,
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
 Are breathers of an ampler day
 For ever nobler ends. They say,
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
 And grew to seeming-random forms,
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branched from clime to
 clime,
 The herald of a higher race,
 And of himself in higher place,
 If so he type³ this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;
 Or, crowned with attributes of woe
 Like glories, move his course, and
 show

That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
 And heated hot with burning fears,
 And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
 And battered with the shocks of doom

¹ The reference in these three lines is to the hour-glass, sun-dial, and clock.

² In this section Tennyson gives his view of cosmic evolution.

³ typify.

To shape and use. Arise and fly
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
 Move upward, working out the beast, 55
 And let the ape and tiger die.

126

Love is and was my lord and king,
 And in his presence I attend
 To hear the tidings of my friend,
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord, 5
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep
 Within his court on earth, and sleep
 Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
 That moves about from place to place, 10
 And whispers to the worlds of space,
 In the deep night, that all is well.

127

And all is well, tho' faith and form
 Be sundered in the night of fear;
 Well roars the storm to those that hear 15
 A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
 And justice, even tho' thrice again
 The red fool-fury of the Seine
 Should pile her barricades with dead. 20

But ill for him that wears a crown,
 And him, the lazar, in his rags!
 They tremble, the sustaining crags;
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood; 25
 The fortress crashes from on high,
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,
 And the great Æon ² sinks in blood,

And compassed by the fires of hell;
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star, 30
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

1833-50.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

This poem, in an earlier form, was first published as a pamphlet in September, 1852, on the day that Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo, was buried.

1 age.

Bury the Great Duke
 With an empire's lamentation;
 Let us bury the Great Duke
 To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation;
 Mourning when their leaders fall, 5
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

2

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
 Here, in streaming London's central roar.¹
 Let the sound of those he wrought for, 10
 And the feet of those he fought for,
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

3

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
 As fits an universal woe,
 Let the long, long procession go, 15
 And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
 And let the mournful martial music blow;
 The last great Englishman is low.

4

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
 Remembering all his greatness in the past.
 No more in soldier fashion will he greet 21
 With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
 O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!
 Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute, 25
 Whole in himself, a common good.
 Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
 Our greatest yet with least pretence,
 Great in council and great in war, 30
 Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good gray head which all men knew, 35
 O voice from which their omens all men drew,
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,
 O fallen at length that tower of strength
 Which stood four-square to all the winds that
 blew!

Such was he whom we deplore. 40
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's ² victor will be seen
 no more.

5

All is over and done.
 Render thanks to the Giver,

1 St. Paul's Cathedral.

2 Napoleon.

England, for thy son.
 Let the bell be tolled.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mould.
 Under the cross of gold ¹
 That shines over city and river,
 There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be tolled,
 And a reverent people behold
 The towering car, the sable steeds. ⁵⁵
 Bright let it be with its blazoned deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be tolled,
 And a deeper knell in the heart be knolled;
 And the sound of the sorrowing anthem
 rolled ⁶⁰
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
 And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
 He knew their voices of old.
 For many a time in many a clime
 His captain's-ear has heard them boom ⁶⁵
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.
 When he with those deep voices wrought,
 Guarding realms and kings from shame,
 With those deep voices our dead captain
 taught
 The tyrant, and asserts his claim
 In that dread sound to the great name
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,
 In praise and in dispraise the same,
 A man of well-attempted frame.
 O civic muse, to such a name, ⁷⁵
 To such a name for ages long,
 To such a name,
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,
 And ever-echoing avenues of song!

6

"Who is he that cometh, like an honored
 guest, ⁸⁰
 With banner and with music, with soldier and
 with priest,
 With a nation weeping, and breaking on my
 rest?" —
 Mighty Seaman,² this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.
 Thine island loves thee well, thou famous
 man, ⁸⁵
 The greatest sailor since our world began.
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
 To thee the greatest soldier comes;
 For this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea. ⁹⁰
 His foes were thine; he kept us free;
 O give him welcome, this is he

Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee;
 For this is England's greatest son, ⁹⁵
 He that gained a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun;
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye ¹
 Clashed with his fiery few and won; ¹⁰⁰
 And underneath another sun,
 Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted Lisbon ² drew
 The treble works, the vast designs
 Of his labored rampart-lines, ¹⁰⁵
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines
 Back to France her banded swarms, ¹¹⁰
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles ³ flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Followed up in valley and glen
 With blare of bugle, clamor of men, ¹¹⁵
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes.
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle ⁴ rose
 In anger, wheeled on Europe-shadowing
 wings, ¹²⁰
 And barking for the thrones of kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown ⁵
 On that loud sabbath ⁶ shook the spoiler
 down;
 A day of onsets of despair!
 Dashed on every rocky square, ¹²⁵
 Their surging charges foamed themselves
 away;
 Last, the Prussian ⁷ trumpet blew;
 Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and over-
 threw. ¹³⁰
 So great a soldier taught us there
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile, ¹³⁵
 O savior of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic ⁸ and the Nile,⁹
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,

¹ In India.² In the Peninsular campaign.³ The French standards.⁴ Napoleon, after his escape from Elba.⁵ Wellington was known as the "Iron Duke."⁶ Waterloo was fought on Sunday.⁷ The arrival of the Prussians under Blücher decided the outcome of the battle.⁸ Where Nelson defeated the Danes in 1801.⁹ At the battle of the Nile in 1798 Nelson defeated the French.¹ Surmounting the dome of St. Paul's.² Lord Nelson, near whom Wellington was buried.

If love of country move thee there at all, 140
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame, 145
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
 Eternal honor to his name. 150

7

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless
 Powers,¹
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly
 set
 His Briton in blown seas and storming show-
 ers, 155
 We have a voice with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought, and kept it
 ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control!
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the
 soul 160
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there
 springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings! 165
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of
 mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be
 just.
 But wink ² no more in slothful overtrust. 170
 Remember him who led your hosts;
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever; and whatever tempests lour 175
 For ever silent; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who
 spoke;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 Nor paltered with Eternal God for power; 180
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
 Whose life was work, whose language rife

With rugged maxims hewn from life;
 Who never spoke against a foe; 185
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right.
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke;
 Whatever record leap to light 190
 He never shall be shamed.

8

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Followed by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands 195
 Lavish Honor showered all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune¹ emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great
 But as he saves or serves the state. 200
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story
 The path of duty was the way to glory.
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes, 205
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outtreden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story
 The path of duty was the way to glory. 210
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
 His path upward, and prevailed,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
 Are close upon the shining table-lands 216
 To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
 Such was he: his work is done.
 But while the races of mankind endure,
 Let his great example stand 220
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman
 pure;
 Till in all lands and thro' all human story
 The path of duty be the way to glory.
 And let the land whose hearths he saved from
 shame 225
 For many and many an age proclaim
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him, 230
 Eternal honor to his name.

9

Peace, his triumph will be sung
 By some yet unmoulded tongue

¹ The European revolutions of 1848 had taken place only four years before.

² doze.

¹ In England a victorious commander is honored not only with orders and titles, but with large grants of money.

Far on in summers that we shall not see.
 Peace, it is a day of pain 235
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung.
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one upon whose hand and heart and brain
 Once the weight and fate of Europe hung. 240
 Ours the pain, be his the gain!
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 Whom we see not we revere; 245
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 As befits a solemn fane: 250
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
 Until we doubt not that for one so true 255
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And Victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
 And break the shore, and evermore 260
 Make and break, and work their will,
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours,
 What know we greater than the soul? 265
 On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's
 ears;
 The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs
 and tears;
 The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust; 270
 He is gone who seemed so great. —
 Gone, but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in State, 275
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in the vast cathedral leave him, 285
 God accept him, Christ receive him!

1852.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Written to commemorate the famous cavalry
 charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in the
 Crimea in 1854.

I
 Half a league, half a league,
 Half a league onward,
 All in the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!" 5
 Charge for the guns!" he said.
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

2
 "Forward, the Light Brigade!"
 Was there a man dismayed?
 Not tho' the soldier knew
 Some one had blundered.
 Their's not to make reply,
 Their's not to reason why,
 Their's but to do and die, 15
 Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

3
 Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of hell 25
 Rode the six hundred.

4
 Flashed all their sabres bare,
 Flashed as they turned in air
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while 30
 All the world wondered.
 Plunged in the battery-smoke
 Right thro' the line they broke;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reeled from the sabre-stroke 35
 Shattered and sundered.
 Then they rode back, but not,
 Not the six hundred.

5
 Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon behind them
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 While horse and hero fell,
 They that had fought so well 45
 Came thro' the jaws of Death
 Back from the mouth of hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

6

When can their glory fade?
 O the wild charge they made!
 All the world wondered.
 Honor the charge they made!
 Honor the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred!

December, 1854.

LYRICS FROM *MAUD*

Tennyson called *Maud* a monodrama. It is a lyrical narrative in which the hero of the story tells the tale in a roundabout, emotional manner. The hero is a selfish, morbid man who is weighed down by dark thoughts concerning existence until he goes completely mad. He overcomes his hyper-sensitiveness and is restored to sanity through love. The poem is unequal in execution; but it contains some of the ablest lyrics that Tennyson wrote.

I

Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,
 Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone;
 And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad, 5
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

2

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky, 10
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

3

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon;
 All night has the casement jessamine stirred
 To the dancers dancing in tune; 16
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

4

I said to the lily, "There is but one,
 With whom she has heart to be gay. 20
 When will the dancers leave her alone?
 She is weary of dance and play."
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone 25
 The last wheel echoes away.

5

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.

O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine? 30
 But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
 "For ever and ever, mine."

6

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
 As the music clashed in the hall;
 And long by the garden lake I stood, 35
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to the
 wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

7

From the meadow your walks have left so
 sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs 40
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

8

The slender acacia would not shake 45
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
 But the rose was awake all night for your
 sake,
 Knowing your promise to me; 50
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sighed for the dawn and thee.

9

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls, 55
 Queen lily and rose in one;
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with
 curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

10

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate. 60
 She is coming, my dove, my dear;
 She is coming, my life, my fate.
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
 And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;" 65
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

11

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed; 70

My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead,
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

The following lyric is the germ of the poem.
 The rest of *Maud* was written later to explain
 these lines.

1

O that 'twere possible
 After long grief and pain
 To find the arms of my true love
 Round me once again!

2

When I was wont to meet her
 In the silent woody places
 By the home that gave me birth,
 We stood tranced in long embraces
 Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter
 Than any thing on earth.

3

A shadow flits before me,
 Not thou, but like to thee.
 Ah, Christ, that it were possible
 For one short hour to see
 The souls we loved, that they might tell us
 What and where they be!

4

It leads me forth at evening,
 It lightly winds and steals
 In a cold white robe before me,
 When all my spirit reels
 At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
 And the roaring of the wheels.

5

Half the night I waste in sighs,
 Half in dreams I sorrow after
 The delight of early skies;
 In a wakeful doze I sorrow
 For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
 For the meeting of the morrow,
 The delight of happy laughter,
 The delight of low replies.

6

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
 And a dewy splendor falls
 On the little flower that clings
 To the turrets and the walls;
 'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
 And the light and shadow fleet.
 She is walking in the meadow,
 And the woodland echo rings;

In a moment we shall meet.
 She is singing in the meadow,
 And the rivulet at her feet
 Ripples on in light and shadow
 To the ballad that she sings.

7

Do I hear her sing as of old,
 My bird with the shining head,
 My own dove with the tender eye?
 But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,
 There is some one dying or dead,
 And a sullen thunder is rolled;
 For a tumult shakes the city,
 And I wake, my dream is fled.
 In the shuddering dawn, behold,
 Without knowledge, without pity,
 By the curtains of my bed
 That abiding phantom cold!

8

Get thee hence, nor come again,
 Mix not memory with doubt,
 Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
 Pass and cease to move about!
 'Tis the blot upon the brain
 That *will* show itself without.

9

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
 And the yellow vapors choke
 The great city sounding wide;
 The day comes, a dull red ball
 Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
 On the misty river-tide.

10

Thro' the hubbub of the market
 I steal, a wasted frame;
 It crosses here, it crosses there,
 Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
 The shadow still the same;
 And on my heavy eyelids
 My anguish hangs like shame.

11

Alas for her that met me,
 That heard me softly call,
 Came glimmering thro' the laurels
 At the quiet evenfall,
 In the garden by the turrets
 Of the old manorial hall!

12

Would the happy spirit descend
 From the realms of light and song,
 In the chamber or the street,
 As she looks among the blest,

Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest"?"

13

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

Pub. 1855.

MILTON

(ALCAICS)

Here Tennyson attempts to reproduce the effect of classical quantitative verse. The poem is composed of four Alcaic strophes. This strophe or stanza was developed by the Greek poet Alcaeus (sixth century B.C.). Many later poets, especially Horace, used it.

O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,

God-gifted organ-voice of England,

Milton, a name to resound for ages;

Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starred from Jehovah's gorgeous armor-
ies,

Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean

Rings to the roar of an angel onset!

Me rather all that bowery loneliness,

The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches

Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,

Where some refulgent sunset of India

Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,

And crimson-hued the stately palm-
woods

Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Pub. 1863.

NORTHERN FARMER, OLD
STYLE

I

Wheer 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän?

Noorse? ² thoort nowt o' a noorse; whoy,

Doctor's abeän an' agoän;

¹ lying.² nurse.

83 Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle, but I
beänt a fool;
Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gawin' to break
my rule.

2

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a ¹ says what's
nawways true;

Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things
that a do.

I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I
beän 'ere.

95 An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for
foorty year.

3

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' ere
o' my bed.

"The Amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén,
my friend," a said,

An' a towd ma my sins, an' 's toithe ³ were
due, an' I gied it in hond;

I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy
the lond.

4

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa
mooch to larn.

But a cast oop,⁴ thot a did, 'bout Bessy
Marris's barne.⁵

Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi' Squoire
an' choorch an' staäte,

An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin
the raäte.⁶

5

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afor moy
Sally wur deäd,

An' 'eärd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike a
buzzard-clock ⁷ ower my 'eäd,

An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I
thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,

An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an'
I coom'd awaäy.

6

Bessy Marris's barne! tha ⁸ knaws she laäid
it to meä.

Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un,
sheä.

'Siver, I kep 'um,⁹ I kep 'um, my lass, tha
mun understand;

I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy
the lond.

¹ he.² himself.³ tithe.⁴ he cast up against me.⁵ child.⁶ poor-tax.⁷ June-bug.⁸ thou.⁹ him.

7

But Parson a cooms an' a goäs, an' a says it
eäsy an' freeä: ²⁵

"The Amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén,
my friend," says 'eä.

I weänt sääy men be loiars, thaw summun
said it in 'aäste;

But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a
stubb'd ' Thurnaby waäste.

8

D' ya moind ' the waäste, my lass? naw, naw,
tha was not born then;

Theer wur a boggle ' in it, I often 'eärd 'um,
mysén; ³⁰

Moäst loike a butter-bump, ' fur I 'eärd 'um
about an' about,

But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved 's
an' rembled ' 'um out.

9

Keäper's ' it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer
a-laäid of 'is faäce

Down i' the woild 'enemies ' afor I coom'd
to the plaäce.

Noäks or Thimbleby — toäner ' ed shot 'um
as deäd as a naäil. ³⁵

Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize ' — but
git ma my aäle.

10

Dubbut ' looök at the waäste; theer warn't
not feeäd for a cow;

Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' looök
at it now —

Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's
lots o' feeäd,

Fourscoor yows ' upon it, an' some on it
down i' seeäd. ⁴⁰

11

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a
stubb'd it at fall,

Done it ta-year ' I meän'd, an' runn'd plow
thruff it an' all,

If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let
ma aloän, —

Meä, wi' haäte ' hoonderd haäcre o' Squire's,
an' lond o' my oän.

12

Do Godamoighty know what a 's doing
a-taäkin' o' meä? ⁴⁵

I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder
a peä;

1 broken up for planting. 2 remember.
3 spirit. 4 bittern. 5 tore up. 6 threw.
7 the game-keeper's. 8 anemones.
9 one or the other. 10 the assizes. 11 do but.
12 ewes. 13 clover. 14 this year. 15 eight.

An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a' dear,
a' dear!

And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michael-
mas thutty year.

13

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant not a
'aäpoth o' sense,

Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins — a niver
mended a fence; ⁵⁰

But Godamoighty a moost taäke meä an'
taäke ma now,

Wi' aäf the cows to cauve ' an' Thurnaby
hoälms ' to plow!

14

Looök 'ow quoloty 's smoles when they seeäs
ma a passin' boy,

Says to thessén, ' naw doubt, "What a man
a beä sewer-loy!" 's

Fur they knaws what I beän to Squire sin'
fust a coom'd to the 'All; ⁵⁵

I done moy duty by Squire an' I done moy
duty boy hall.

15

Squire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons
'ull 'a to wroite,

For whoä's to howd ' the lond ater meä thot
muddles ma quoit;

Sartin-sewer I beä thot a weänt niver give it
to Joänes,

Naw, nor a moänt to Robins — a niver rem-
bles the stoäns. ⁶⁰

16

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi'
'is kittle o' steäm

Huzzin' ' an' maäzin ' the blessed feälts wi'
the divil's oän teäm.

Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they
says is sweet,

But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn
abeär to see it.

17

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring
ma the aäle? ⁶⁵

Doctor's a 'toättler, ' lass, an a's hallus i' the
owd taäle; ⁷⁰

I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw
moor nor a floy;

Git ma my aäle, I tell tha, an' if I mun doy
I mun doy.

Pub. 1864.

1 calve. 2 holms. 3 the gentry.
4 themselves. 5 surely. 6 hold.
7 hissing. 8 amazing. 9 teetotaler.
10 always telling the same story.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the
hills and the plains, —
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who
reigns?

Is not the Vision He, though He be not that
which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we
not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body
and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division
from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the
reason why,
For is He not all but thou, that hast power
to feel "I am I"?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou
fulfillest thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams and a stifled
splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit
with Spirit can meet —
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than
hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us
rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet
His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all, says the
fool,
For all we have power to see is a straight
staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye
of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision —
were it not He?

Pub. 1869.

THE REVENGE

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

Tennyson took the story from Sir Walter
Raleigh's contemporaneous account.

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville
lay,
And a pinnacle, like a fluttered bird, came
flying from far away:

"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted
fifty-three!"

Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore
God I am no coward;

But I cannot meet them here, for my ships
are out of gear,

And the half my men are sick. I must fly,
but follow quick.

We are six ships of the line; can we fight with
fifty-three?"

2

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know
you are no coward;

You fly them for a moment to fight with
them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are lying
sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left
them, my Lord Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms
of Spain."

3

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships
of war that day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
summer heaven;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men
from the land

Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,

And they blessed him in their pain, that they
were not left to Spain,

To the thumb-screw and the stake, for the
glory of the Lord.

4

He had only a hundred seamen to work the
ship and to fight,

And he sailed away from Flores till the
Spaniard came in sight,

With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the
weather-bow.

"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,

For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this
sun be set."

And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good
English men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children
of the devil,

For I never turned my back upon Don or
devil yet."

I windward.

5

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we
 roared a hurrah, and so
 The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart
 of the foe,
 With her hundred fighters on deck, and her
 ninety sick below;
 For half of their fleet to the right and half to
 the left were seen,
 And the little *Revenge* ran on through the
 long sea-lane between.

6

Thousands of their soldiers looked down
 from their decks and laughed,
 Thousands of their seamen made mock at the
 mad little craft
 Running on and on, till delayed
 By their mountain-like *San Philip* that, of
 fifteen hundred tons,
 And up-shadowing high above us with her
 yawning tiers of guns,
 Took the breath from our sails, and we
 stayed.

7

And while now the great *San Philip* hung
 above us like a cloud
 Whence the thunderbolt will fall
 Long and loud,
 Four galleons drew away
 From the Spanish fleet that day,
 And two upon the larboard and two upon the
 starboard lay,
 And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

8

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought
 herself and went,
 Having that within her womb that had left
 her ill content;
 And the rest they came aboard us, and they
 fought us hand to hand,
 For a dozen times they came with their pikes
 and musketeers,
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog
 that shakes his ears
 When he leaps from the water to the land.

9

And the sun went down, and the stars came
 out far over the summer sea,
 But never a moment ceased the fight of the
 one and the fifty-three.
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, their
 high-built galleons came,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, with
 her battle-thunder and flame;

Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew
 back with her dead and her shame.
 For some were sunk and many were shat-
 tered, and so could fight us no more —
 God of battles, was ever a battle like this in
 the world before?

10

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
 Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
 And it chanced that, when half of the short
 summer night was gone,
 With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left
 the deck,
 But a bullet struck him that was dressing it
 suddenly dead,
 And himself he was wounded again in the side
 and the head,
 And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

11

And the night went down, and the sun smiled
 out far over the summer sea,
 And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay
 round us all in a ring;
 But they dared not touch us again, for they
 feared that we still could sting,
 So they watched what the end would be.
 And we had not fought them in vain,
 But in perilous plight were we,
 Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
 slain,
 And half of the rest of us maimed for life
 In the crash of the cannonades and the
 desperate strife;
 And the sick men down in the hold were most
 of them stark and cold,
 And the pikes were all broken or bent, and
 the powder was all of it spent;
 And the masts and the rigging were lying
 over the side;
 But Sir Richard cried in his English pride:
 "We have fought such a fight for a day and
 a night
 As may never be fought again!
 We have won great glory, my men!
 And a day less or more
 At sea or ashore,
 We die — does it matter when?
 Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink
 her, split her in twain!
 Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands
 of Spain!"

12

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the sea-
 men made reply:
 "We have children, we have wives,

And the Lord hath spared our lives.
 We will make the Spaniard promise, if we
 yield, to let us go;
 We shall live to fight again and to strike
 another blow."⁹⁵
 And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded
 to the foe.

13

And the stately Spanish men to their flag-
 ship bore him then,
 Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir
 Richard caught at last,
 And they praised him to his face with their
 courtly foreign grace;
 But he rose upon their decks, and he
 cried:¹⁰⁰
 "I have fought for Queen and Faith like a
 valiant man and true;
 I have only done my duty as a man is bound
 to do.
 With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville
 die!"
 And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

14

And they stared at the dead that had been
 so valiant and true,¹⁰⁵
 And had holden the power and glory of Spain
 so cheap
 That he dared her with one little ship and
 his English few;
 Was he devil or man? He was devil for
 aught they knew,
 But they sank his body with honor down
 into the deep,
 And they manned the *Revenge* with a
 swarthier alien crew,¹¹⁰
 And away she sailed with her loss and longed
 for her own;
 When a wind from the lands they had ruined
 awoke from sleep,
 And the water began to heave and the
 weather to moan,
 And or ever that evening ended a great gale
 blew,
 And a wave like the wave that is raised by
 an earthquake grew,¹¹⁵
 Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and
 their masts and their flags,
 And the whole sea plunged and fell on the
 shot-shattered navy of Spain,
 And the little *Revenge* herself went down by
 the island crags
 To be lost evermore in the main.

Pub. 1878.

RIZPAH

This is a dramatic monologue, based upon a
 story that Tennyson found in a penny maga-
 zine. For the Biblical story of Rizpah, whose
 son was hanged, see 2 Samuel, xxi, 1-14.

17—

1

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land
 and sea —
 And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother,
 come out to me!"
 Why should he call me to-night, when he
 knows that I cannot go?
 For the downs are as bright as day, and the
 full moon stares at the snow.

2

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy
 us out of the town.⁵
 The loud black nights for us, and the storm
 rushing over the down,
 When I cannot see my own hand, but am led
 by the creak of the chain,
 And grovel and grope for my son till I find
 myself drenched with the rain.

3

Anything fallen again? nay — what was
 there left to fall?
 I have taken them home, I have numbered
 the bones, I have hidden them all.¹⁰
 What am I saying? and what are *you*? do
 you come as a spy?
 Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree
 falls so must it lie.

4

Who let her in? how long has she been? you
 — what have you heard?
 Why did you sit so quiet? you never have
 spoken a word.
 O — to pray with me — yes — a lady —
 none of their spies —¹⁵
 But the night has crept into my heart, and
 begun to darken my eyes.

5

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, what
 should *you* know of the night,
 The blast and the burning shame and the
 bitter frost and the fright?
 I have done it, while you were asleep — you
 were only made for the day.
 I have gathered my baby together — and
 now you may go your way.²⁰

6

Nay — for it's kind of you, madam, to sit
by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only
an hour of life.

I kissed my boy in the prison, before he went
out to die.

"They dared me to do it," he said, and he
never has told me a lie.

I whipped him for robbing an orchard once
when he was but a child — 25

"The farmer dared me to do it," he said; he
was always so wild —

And idle — and couldn't be idle — my Willy
— he never could rest.

The King should have made him a sol-
dier, he would have been one of his
best.

7

But he lived with a lot of wild mates,
and they never would let him be
good;

They swore that he dare not rob the mail,
and he swore that he would; 30

And he took no life, but he took one purse,
and when all was done

He flung it among his fellows — "I'll none
of it," said my son.

8

I came into court to the judge and the
lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth — but they killed him, they
killed him for robbing the mail.

They hanged him in chains for a show — we
had always borne a good name — 35

To be hanged for a thief — and then put
away — isn't that enough shame?

Dust to dust — low down — let us hide! but
they set him so high

That all the ships of the world could stare
at him, passing by.

God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and
horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer who
killed him and hanged him there. 40

9

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid
him my last good-bye;

They had fastened the door of his cell. "O
mother!" I heard him cry.

I couldn't get back though I tried, he had
something further to say,

And now I never shall know it. The jailer
forced me away.

10

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry, of
my boy that was dead, 45

They seized me and shut me up: they
fastened me down on my bed.

"Mother, O mother!" — he called in the
dark to me year after year —

They beat me for that, they beat me — you
know that I couldn't but hear;

And then at the last they found I had grown
so stupid and still

They let me abroad again — but the crea-
tures had worked their will. 50

11

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my
bone was left —

I stole them all from the lawyers — and you,
will you call it a theft? —

My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the
bones that had laughed and had
cried —

Theirs? O, no! they are mine — not theirs
— they had moved in my side.

12

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kissed 'em, I buried 'em all — 55

I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night by
the churchyard wall.

My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet
of judgment 'ill sound,

But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

13

They would scratch him up — they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.

Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know — let all
that be, 60

And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
goodwill toward men —

"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"
— let me hear it again;

"Full of compassion and mercy — long-
suffering." Yes, O, yes!

For the lawyer is born but to murder — the
Savior lives but to bless.

He'll never put on the black cap¹ except for
the worst of the worst, 65

And the first may be last — I have heard it
in church — and the last may be first.

Suffering — O, long-suffering — yes, as the
Lord must know,

Year after year in the mist and the wind and
the shower and the snow.

¹ Worn by an English judge when pronouncing a death-sentence.

14

Heard, have you? what? they have told you
 he never repented his sin.
 How do they know it? are *they* his mother?
 are *you* of his kin? 70
 Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm
 on the downs began,
 The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the
 sea that 'ill moan like a man?

15

Election, Election, and Reprobation^r — it's
 all very well.
 But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not
 find him in hell.
 For I cared so much for my boy that the
 Lord has looked into my care, 75
 And He means me I'm sure to be happy with
 Willy, I know not where.

16

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul, that
 is all your desire —
 Do you think I care for *my* soul if my boy be
 gone to the fire?
 I have been with God in the dark — go, go,
 you may leave me alone —
 You have never borne a child — you are
 just as hard as a stone. 80

17

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that
 you mean to be kind,
 But I cannot hear what you say for my
 Willy's voice in the wind —

^r In Calvinistic theology, election was foreordained salvation, and reprobation, foreordained damnation, of certain souls.

The snow and the sky so bright — he used
 but to call in the dark,
 And he calls to me now from the church and
 not from the gibbet — for hark!
 Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is com-
 ing — shaking the walls — 85
 Willy — the moon's in a cloud — Good-
 night. I am going. He calls.

Pub. 1880.

CROSSING THE BAR

This lyric, written towards the end of Ten-
 nyson's life, is always placed, at the poet's re-
 quest, at the end of every edition of his poems.

Sunset and evening star,
 And one clear call for me!
 And may there be no moaning of the bar,
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep, 5
 Too full for sound and foam,
 When that which drew from out the bound-
 less deep
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark! 10
 And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time and
 Place

The flood may bear me far,
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face 15
 When I have crost the bar.

Pub. 1889.

ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889)

Robert Browning, essentially a city poet, was born in Camberwell, then a suburb, now a part of London, May 7, 1812. His education was informal, but thorough, largely through tutors, concluding with two years at the University of London. Besides Latin, Greek, French, and other studies, he had instruction in riding, dancing, boxing, music, and sculpture. He early decided to be a poet, largely under the influence of his first gods, Keats and especially Shelley. In 1832, at twenty, he began his career with *Pauline*, followed in 1835 by *Paracelsus*. These poems brought him friendship with the prominent literary men in London, especially Leigh Hunt, Talfourd, Landon, and Macready. For the latter he wrote a play, *Stratford*, produced in May, 1837. Then followed a year abroad, mainly in Italy, Browning's second country. During this period he completed *Sordello*, published in 1840. From 1841 to 1846 he published his eight series of *Bells and Pomegranates*, so called, as he explained, "to indicate an endeavor towards something like an alternation, or mixture, of music with discoursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought." Of these, No. I contained *Pippa Passes*, III and VII, many of his dramatic lyrics, and V, *A Blot in the Scutcheon*, which was produced by Macready the same year that it was published. In 1846 he married Elizabeth Barrett, the poetess, and took up his residence with her in Florence, Italy. There they lived in great happiness until her death fifteen years later, whereupon Browning returned to

England. While in Italy, his chief production was *Men and Women*, in two volumes, 1855, in which appeared many of his well-known poems. Of the many volumes that he published thereafter the most important are *Dramatis Persona*, 1864; *The Ring and the Book*, 1868, his greatest achievement; and *Asolando*, 1890, his last book of poems. Browning died at his son's home, in Venice, December 12, 1889. He was buried in the Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey.

In his day Browning had to yield in popularity to his contemporary, Tennyson. Since then his vogue has grown greatly, and he has ceased to be regarded as a "difficult" poet. Most of the difficulties in Browning are due to the fact that he does not pretend to be logical in his poems; he follows the association of ideas as one suggests another. In his dramatic lyrics, it must be remembered, too, the hero is speaking, not the poet, whose purpose is merely to reproduce an intricate, psychological process, not to analyze it. Often, too, Browning attempts through the connotation of sounds to be suggestive as in music, rather than exactly informative. When he packs his poems with strange allusions and obscure references, then Browning presupposes too much in the reader and may justly be criticized.

In his philosophy the foremost idea is the value of developing one's personality or soul. In this, the will to effort, supplemented by courage and faith, is the most powerful force. The great sins to Browning are "sluggishness, indifference, sloth of living."

An excellent one-volume edition of Browning's poems is the Cambridge Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company. For his life, see G. K. Chesterton's in English Men of Letters series, and Mrs. Sutherland Orr's, Houghton Mifflin Company. For guides to the poems, see the latter's handbook, as well as those by E. Berdoe and G. W. Cooke.

PIPPA'S SONG

The song of the heroine in *Pippa Passes*.

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing; 5
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

Pub. 1841.

CAVALIER TUNES

These three lyrics express superbly the gallant devotion of the Cavaliers to Charles I and the disdain in which they held the Puritans. The songs first appeared in the third number of *Bells and Pomegranates*.

Note the drum-beat throughout *Marching Along*.

I. MARCHING ALONG

Kentish Sir Byng¹ stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament² swing:
And, pressing³ a troop unable to stoop
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk
droop,
Marched them along, fifty-score strong, 5
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles! Pym⁴ and such
carles⁵

¹ One of the Byngs, a prominent Kentish family.
² The so-called Long Parliament, 1640-60, dominated by the Puritan roundheads.

³ impressing, enlisting.

⁴ Pym, Hampden, and Cromwell were the leaders among the Puritans.

⁵ churls.

To the Devil that prompts 'em their treason-
ous parles!¹

Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor
sup 10
Till you're —

Chorus. — Marching along, fifty-score
strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-
ing this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry²
as well!

England, good cheer! Rupert³ is near! 15
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

Cho. — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his
snarls

To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent
carles! 20

Hold by the right, you double your might;
So, onward to Nottingham,⁴ fresh for the fight,

Cho. — March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song!

2. GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

¹ discussions.

² All Puritans.

³ The King's nephew.

⁴ Here in 1642 the King gathered the loyalists, raised his standard, and proclaimed civil war.

Who gave me¹ the goods that went since? 5
 Who raised me the house that sank once?
 Who helped me to gold I spent since?
 Who found² me in wine you drank once?

Cho. — King Charles, and who'll do him
 right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for
 fight now? 10

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's
 despite now,

King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
 By the old fool's side that begot him?
 For whom did he cheer and laugh else, 15
 While Noll's³ damned troopers shot him?

Cho. — King Charles, and who'll do him
 right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for
 fight now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's
 despite now

King Charles! 20

3. BOOT, AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!
 Rescue my castle before the hot day
 Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd
 say; 5

Many's the friend there, will listen and
 pray

"God's luck to gallants that strike up the
 lay —

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
 Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads'
 array; 10

Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my
 fay,

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and
 gay,

Laughs when you talk of surrendering,
 "Nay!

I've better counsellors; what counsel
 they? 15

Cho. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Pub. 1842.

¹ The speaker here, as in the next poem, is an imaginary Cavalier.

² kept, supplied with.

³ Oliver Cromwell's.

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

The Duke shows the portrait of his late wife
 to the envoy from his fiancée's father.

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
 Looking as if she were alive. I call

That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's
 hand

Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
 Will't please you sit and look at her? I said

"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read 6
 Strangers like you that pictured countenance,

The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
 But to myself they turned (since none puts

by
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10

And seemed as they would ask me, if they
 durst,

How such a glance came there; so, not the
 first

Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
 Her husband's presence only, called that spot

Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps 15
 Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle

laps
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint

Must never hope to reproduce the faint
 Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such

stuff
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause 20

enough
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had

A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made
 glad,

Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
 She looked on, and her looks went every-

where.

Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast, 25
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,

The bough of cherries some officious fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule

She rode with round the terrace — all and
 each

Would draw from her alike the approving
 speech, 30

Or blush, at least. She thanked men, —
 good! but thanked

Somehow — I know not how — as if she
 ranked

My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame

This sort of trifling? Even had you skill 35
 In speech — (which I have not) — to make

your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this

¹ An imaginary painter-monk.

Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
 Or there exceed the mark" — and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
 — E'en then would be some stooping; and I
 choose
 Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no
 doubt,
 Where'er I passed her; but who passed with-
 out
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave
 commands; 45
 Then all smiles stopped together.¹ There she
 stands
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
 The company below, then. I repeat,
 The Count your master's known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence 50
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
 Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity, 55
 Which Claus of Innsbruck² cast in bronze
 for me!

Pub. 1842.

SOLILOQUY OF THE SPANISH CLOISTER

Gr-r-r — there go, my heart's abhorrence!
 Water your damned flower-pots, do!
 If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
 God's blood, would not mine kill you!
 What? your myrtle-bush wants trimming? 5
 Oh, that rose has prior claims —
 Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?
 Hell dry you up with its flames!

At the meal we sit together:
*Salve tibi!*³ I must hear 10
 Wise talk of the kind of weather,
 Sort of season, time of year:
Not a plenteous cork-crop: scarcely
Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt:
What's the Latin name for "parsley"? 15
 What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,
 Laid with care on our own shelf!
 With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,
 And a goblet for ourself, 20
 Rinsed like something sacrificial

Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps —
 Marked with L for our initial!
 (He-he! There his lily snaps!)

Saint, forsooth! While brown Dolores 25
 Squats outside the Convent bank
 With Sanchicha, telling stories,
 Steeping tresses in the tank,
 Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,
 — Can't I see his dead eye glow, 30
 Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's?
 (That is, if he'd let it show!)

When he finishes refection,¹
 Knife and fork he never lays
 Cross-wise, to my recollection, 35
 As do I, in Jesu's praise.
 I the Trinity illustrate,
 Drinking watered orange-pulp —
 In three sips the Arian² frustrate;
 While he drains his at one gulp. 40

Oh, those melons! If he's able
 We're to have a feast! so nice!
 One goes to the Abbot's table,
 All of us get each a slice.
 How go on your flowers? None double? 45
 Not one fruit-sort can you spy?
 Strange! — And I, too, at such trouble
 Keep them close-nipped on the sly!

There's a great text in Galatians,
 Once you trip on it, entails 50
 Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
 One sure, if another fails:
 If I trip him just a-dying,
 Sure of heaven as sure can be,
 Spin him round and send him flying 55
 Off to hell, a Manichee?³

Or, my scrofulous French novel
 On gray paper with blunt type!
 Simply glance at it, you grovel
 Hand and foot in Belial's⁴ gripe: 60
 If I double down⁵ its pages
 At the woeful sixteenth print,
 When he gathers his greengages,⁶
 Ope a sieve and slip it in't?

Or, there's Satan! — one might venture 65
 Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
 Such a flaw in the indenture⁷
 As he'd miss till, past retrieve,

¹ the meal.

² A believer in the creed of Arius regarding the Trinity.

³ Member of an early Christian sect that embraced
 some Eastern beliefs.

⁴ the devil's.

⁵ bend over

⁶ greenish plums

⁷ contract, bond.

¹ He had the Duchess put to death.

² Innsbruck in the Tyrol is famous for the well-known
 bronze statues of King Arthur, Theodoric, and others.

Claus, however, is an imaginary sculptor.

³ How are you?

Blasted lay that rose-acacia

We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine . . .* 70
'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratiâ,*
Ave, Virgo! 1 Gr-r-r — you swine!

Pub. 1843.

THE LOST LEADER

The best explanation of the poem is contained in the following letter of Browning, written in reply to the question whether, in composing the piece, he had in mind Wordsworth after his defection from liberalism:

* 19 Warwick-Crescent, W., Feb. 24, '75

DEAR MR. GROSART, — I have been asked the question you now address me with, and as duly answered it, I can't remember how many times; there is no sort of objection to one more assurance or rather confession, on my part, that I *did* in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about "handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon." These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore. But just as in the tapestry on my wall I can recognize figures which have *struck out* a fancy, on occasion, that though truly enough thus derived, yet would be preposterous as a copy, so, though I dare not deny the original of my little poem, I altogether refuse to have it considered as the "very effigies" of such a moral and intellectual superiority.

Faithfully yours,

ROBERT BROWNING

Just for the handful of silver he left us,

Just for a riband to stick in his coat —

Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,

Lost all the others she lets us devote;

They, with the gold to give, doled him out
silver, 5

So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!

Rags — were they purple, his heart had
been proud!

We that had loved him so, followed him,
honored him,

Lived in his mild and magnificent eye, 10
Learned his great language, caught his clear
accents,

Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,

1 Hail, Mary, full of grace.

Burns, Shelley, were with us, — they
watch from their graves!

He alone breaks from the van and the free-
men, — 15

He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!
We shall march prospering, — not through
his presence;

Songs may inspirit us, — not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done, — while he boasts his
quiescence,

Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade
aspire: 20

Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul
more,

One task more declined, one more footpath
untrod,

One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for
angels,

One wrong more to man, one more insult to
God!

Life's night begins: let him never come back
to us! 25

There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part — the glimmer of
twilight,

Never glad confident morning again!

Best 1 fight on well, for we taught him —
strike gallantly,

Menace our heart ere we master his
own; 2 30

Then let him receive the new knowledge and
wait us,

Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

Pub. 1845.

MEETING AT NIGHT

This and the next poem are companion pieces, originally published under the title *Night and Morning*. The speaker in both poems is a man.

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow, 5
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match, 10
And a voice less loud, through its joys and
fears,

Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Pub. 1845.

1 i.e., for him.

2 i.e., almost defeat us before we conquer him.

PARTING AT MORNING

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,¹
And the need of a world of men for me.

Pub. 1845.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM
ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood
sheaf⁵
Round the elm-tree bole² are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard
bough
In England — now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the
swallows!¹⁰
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the
hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops — at the bent
spray's edge —
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song
twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recap-
ture¹⁵
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary
dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
— Far brighter than this gaudy melon-
flower!²⁰

Pub. 1845.

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB
AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

Rome, 15—

Students of the Renaissance have praised this dramatic lyric highly for the manner in which it re-creates the temper of the age. Ruskin's estimate is often cited:

"I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit, — its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of

¹ the sun.

² trunk.

good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much solution before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal."

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping back?
Nephews — sons mine . . . ah God, I know
not! Well —
She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!⁵
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a
dream.

Life, how and what is it? As here I lie¹⁰
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems
all.

Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought¹⁵
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye
know:

— Old Gandolf cozened¹ me, despite my care;
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner
South

He graced his carrion with, God curse the
same!

Yet still my niche is not so cramped but
thence²⁰

One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,²
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up into the aery dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,²⁵
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and
two,

The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.³⁰
— Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,³
Put me where I may look at him! True
peach,

Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!
Draw close: that conflagration of my church

¹ cheated, fooled.

² The side of the altar from which the Epistles of the New Testament are read. In the liturgy, this reading occurs between the collect and the Gospel.

³ A poorer marble.

— What then? So much was saved if aught
 were missed! ³⁵
 My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
 The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press
 stood,
 Drop water gently till the surface sink,
 And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .
 Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft, ⁴⁰
 And corded up in a tight olive-frail,¹
 Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
 Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
 Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast . . .
 Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all, ⁴⁵
 That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
 So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
 Like God the Father's glove on both his
 hands
 Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
 For Gandolf shall not choose but see and
 burst! ⁵⁰
 Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
 Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
 Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black —
 'Twas ever antique-black I meant! How
 else
 Shall ye contrast my frieze to come be-
 neath? ⁵⁵
 The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
 Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and per-
 chance
 Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
 The Savior at his sermon on the mount,
 Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan, ⁶⁰
 Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment
 off,
 And Moses with the tables . . . but I know
 Ye mark me not! What do they whisper
 thee,
 Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
 To revel down my villas while I gasp ⁶⁵
 Bricked o'er with beggar's moldy travertine²
 Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles
 at!
 Nay, boys, ye love me — all of jasper, then!
 'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve
 My bath must needs be left behind, alas! ⁷⁰
 One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,
 There's plenty jasper somewhere in the
 world —
 And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
 Horses for ye, and brown³ Greek manu-
 scripts.
 And mistresses with great smooth marbly
 limbs? ⁷⁵
 — That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,

Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's¹ every
 word,
 No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line —
 Tully, my masters? Ulpian² serves his need!
 And then how I shall lie through centuries, 80
 And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
 And see God made and eaten all day long,
 And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
 Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke!
 For as I lie here, hours of the dead night, ⁸⁵
 Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
 I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
 And stretch my feet forth straight as stone
 can point,
 And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
 Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work: ⁹⁰
 And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange
 thoughts
 Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
 About the life before I lived this life,
 And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,
 Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount, ⁹⁵
 Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,
 And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,
 And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
 — Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?
 No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best! ¹⁰⁰
 Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
 All *lapis*, all, sons! 'Else I give the Pope
 My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
 Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick, ¹⁰⁴
 They glitter like your mother's for my soul,
 Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze,
 Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase
 With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,³
 And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
 That in his struggle throws the thyrsus
 down, ¹¹⁰
 To comfort me on my entablature
 Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
 "Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me,
 there!
 For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
 To death — ye wish it — God, ye wish it!
 Stone — ¹¹⁵
 Gritstone,⁴ a-crumble! Clammy squares
 . which sweat
 As if the corpse they keep were oozing
 through —
 And no more *lapis* to delight the world!
 Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,
 But in a row: and, going, turn your backs ¹²⁰
 — Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,
 And leave me in my church, the church for
 peace,

¹ A rush basket for holding olives.² Ordinary marble from Tivoli.³ The color of old vellum.¹ Cicero's.² A minor Latin stylist.³ Bust or statue terminating or topping a stone shaft or pedestal.⁴ A soft stone.

That I may watch at leisure if he leers —
 Old Gandolf — at me, from his onion-stone,
 As still he envied me, so fair she was! 125
 Pub. 1845.

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

The setting of the poem is the Roman Campagna.

Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
 Miles and miles

On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep

Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray
 or stop 5

As they crop —
 Was the site once of a city great and gay,
 (So they say)

Of our country's very capital, its prince
 Ages since 10

Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding
 far

Peace or war.

Now, — the country does not even boast a
 tree,

As you see,
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills 15
 From the hills

Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
 Into one,)

Where the domed and daring palace shot its
 spires

Up like fires 20

O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall

Bounding all,

Made of marble, men might march on nor
 be pressed,

Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of
 grass 25

Never was!

Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-
 spreads

And embeds

Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
 Stock or stone — 30

Where a multitude of men breathed joy and
 woe

Long ago;

Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread
 of shame

Struck them tame;

And that glory and that shame alike, the
 gold 35

Bought and sold.

Now, — the single little turret that remains
 On the plains,

By the caper¹ overrooted, by the gourd
 Overscored, 40

While the patching houseleek's head of
 blossom winks

Through the chinks —

Marks the basement whence a tower in
 ancient time

Sprang sublime,

And a burning ring, all round, the chariots
 traced 45

As they raced,

And the monarch and his minions and his
 dames

Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
 Smiles to leave 50

To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
 In such peace,

And the slopes and rills in undistinguished
 gray

Melt away —

That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair 55
 Waits me there

In the turret whence the charioteers caught
 soul

For the goal,

When the king looked, where she looks now,
 breathless, dumb

Till I come. 60

But he looked upon the city, every side,

Far and wide,

All the mountains topped with temples, all
 the glades'

Colonnades,

All the causeys,² bridges, aqueducts, — and
 then, 65

All the men!

When I do come, she will speak not, she will
 stand,

Either hand

On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
 Of my face, 70

Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and
 speech

Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
 South and North,

And they built their gods a brazen pillar
 high 75

As the sky,

¹ A plant, the buds of which are used for seasoning
 in cooking.
² highways.

Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full
force —

Gold, of course.

Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that
burns!

Earth's returns 80

For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!

Shut them in,

With their triumphs and their glories and the
rest!

Love is best.

Pub. 1855.

UP AT A VILLA — DOWN IN THE CITY

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON
OF QUALITY)

Had I but plenty of money, money enough
and to spare,

The house for me, no doubt, were a house in
the city-square;

Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the
window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to
hear, at least!

There, the whole day long, one's life is a
perfect feast; 5

While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it,
no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the
horn of a bull

Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the
creature's skull,

Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf
to pull!

— I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the
hair's turned wool. 10

But the city, oh the city — the square with
the houses! Why?

They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's
something to take the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single
front awry;

You watch who crosses and gossips, who
saunters, who hurries by;

Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw
when the sun gets high; 15

And the shops with fanciful signs which are
painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in
March by rights,

'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have
withered well off the heights:

You've the brown ploughed land before,
where the oxen steam and wheeze,

And the hills over-smoked behind by the
faint gray olive-trees. 20

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've
summer all at once;

In a day he leaps complete with a few strong
April suns.

'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce
risen three fingers well,

The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out
its great red bell

Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the
children to pick and sell. 25

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a foun-
tain to spout and splash!

In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine
such foambows flash

On the horses with curling fish-tails, that
prance and paddle and pash

Round the lady atop in her conch — fifty
gazers do not abash,

Though all that she wears is some weeds
round her waist in a sort of sash. 30

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see
though you linger,

Except yon cypress that points like death's
lean lifted forefinger.

Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix
i' the corn and mingle,

Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks of
it seem a-tingle.

Late August or early September, the stunning
cicala is shrill, 35

And the bees keep their tiresome whine
round the resinous firs on the hill.

Enough of the seasons, — I spare you the
months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the
blessed church-bells begin:

No sooner the bells leave off than the dili-
gence rattles in:

You get the pick of the news, and it costs you
never a pin. 40

By and by there's the travelling doctor gives
pills, lets blood, draws teeth;

Or the Pulcinello-trumpet¹ breaks up the
market beneath.

At the post-office such a scene-picture — the
new play, piping hot!

¹ The bugle-call announcing the beginning of the
Punch and Judy show.

And a notice how, only this morning, three
liberal thieves were shot.

Above it, behold the Archbishop's most
fatherly of rebukes, 45

And beneath, with his crown and his lion,
some little new law of the Duke's!

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the
Reverend Don So-and-so,

Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint
Jerome, and Cicero,

"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,)
"the skirts of Saint Paul has reached,

Having preached us those six Lent-lectures
more unctuous than ever he
preached." 50

Noon strikes, — here sweeps the procession!
our Lady borne smiling and smart

With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and
seven swords stuck in her heart!

Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-*
tootle the fife;

No keeping one's haunches still: it's the
greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear — it's dear! fowls,
wine, at double the rate. 55

They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and
what oil pays passing the gate

It's horror to think of. And so, the villa for
me, not the city!

Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still,
ah, the pity, the pity!

Look, two and two go the priests, then the
monks with cowls and sandals,

And the penitents dressed in white shirts,
a-holding the yellow candles; 60

One, he carries a flag up straight, and another
a cross with handles,

And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for
the better prevention of scandals:

Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-*
tootle the fife.

Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such
pleasure in life!

Pub. 1855.

A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

Baldassare Galuppi (1706–85) was an Italian
composer of spirited music, chiefly operas. A
toccata is a light musical composition depend-
ing mainly, as the name implies, upon touch.

Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to
find!

I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove
me deaf and blind;

But although I take your meaning, 'tis with
such a heavy mind!

Here you come with your old music, and
here's all the good it brings.

What, they lived once thus at Venice where
the merchants were the kings, 5

Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used
to wed the sea with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and
'tis arched by . . . what you call

. . . Shylock's bridge¹ with houses on it,
where they kept the carnival:

I was never out of England — it's as if I saw
it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when
the sea was warm in May? 10

Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning
ever to mid-day,

When they made up fresh adventures for
the morrow, do you say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and
lips so red, —

On her neck the small face buoyant, like a
bell-flower on its bed,

O'er the breast's superb abundance where a
man might base his head? 15

Well, and it was graceful of them — they'd
break talk off and afford

— She, to bite her mask's black velvet —
he, to finger on his sword,

While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at
the clavichord?

What? Those lesser² thirds so plaintive,
sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,

Told them something? Those suspen-
sions,³ those solutions⁴ — "Must we
die?" 20

Those commiserating sevenths⁵ — "Life
might last! we can but try!"

"Were you happy?" — "Yes." — "And are
you still as happy?" — "Yes. And
you?"

— "Then, more kisses!" — "Did I stop
them, when a million seemed so
few?"

¹ The Rialto.

² Thirds and sixths in music are intervals embracing three and six tones, respectively, of the ordinary scale. These intervals are called major. If the interval is reduced a half tone, it is called lesser or minor. If reduced still another half tone, it is said to be diminished. Minor and diminished intervals usually sound plaintive or sad.

³ A suspension is a special kind of dissonance.

⁴ A solution or resolution is the concord following a dissonance.

⁵ Intervals of seven tones. "Commiserating" suggests that they were minor, or less a half tone.

Hark, the dominant's persistence 'till it must
be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they
praised you, I dare say! ²⁵

"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike
at grave and gay!

I can always leave off talking when I hear a
master play!"

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in
due time, one by one,

Some with lives that came to nothing, some
with deeds as well undone,

Death stepped tacitly and took them where
they never see the sun. ³⁰

But when I sit down to reason, think to take
my stand nor swerve,

While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from
nature's close reserve,

In you come with your cold music till I creep
through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking
where a house was burned:

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice
spent what Venice earned. ³⁵

The soul, doubtless, is immortal — where a
soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics,
something of geology,

Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall
rise in their degree;

Butterflies may dread extinction, — you'll
not die, it cannot be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely born
to bloom and drop, ⁴⁰

Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth
and folly were the crop:

What of soul was left, I wonder, when the
kissing had to stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I
want the heart to scold.

Dear dead women, with such hair, too —
what's become of all the gold

Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel
chilly and grown old. ⁴⁵

Pub. 1855.

¹ The dominant is a chord based upon the fifth note of the scale. It is called "persistent" because it usually requires a tonic (a chord based on the first note of the scale) to follow.

ONE WAY OF LOVE

All June I bound the rose in sheaves.
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
And strew them where Pauline may pass.
She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string; fold music's wing:
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion — heaven or hell? ¹⁵
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may — I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!

Pub. 1855.

RESPECTABILITY

The lovers in this poem are supposed to be
George Sand and Jules Sandeau, strolling at
night in Paris.

Dear, had the world in its caprice
Deigned to proclaim "I know you both
Have recognized your plighted troth,
Am sponsor for you: live in peace!" —
How many precious months and years ⁵
Of youth had passed, that speed so
fast,

Before we found it out at last,
The world, and what it fears!

How much of priceless life were spent
With men that every virtue decks, ¹⁰
And women models of their sex,
Society's true ornament, —
Ere we dared wander, nights like this,
Through wind and rain, and watch the
Seine,
And feel the Boulevard break again ¹⁵
To warmth and light and bliss!

I know! the world proscribes not love;
Allows my finger to caress
'Your lips' contour and downiness,
Provided it supply a glove.
The world's good word! — the Institute! ²⁰

¹ The Institute of France, composed of five academies, election to which depends upon achievement in art, science, or literature.

Guizot receives Montalembert!
 Eh? Down the court three lampions¹ flare;
 Put forward your best foot!
 Pub. 1855.

THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

The picture of the angel and child that Browning describes in the following poem is in the church of St. Augustine at Fano.

A PICTURE AT FANO

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave

That child, when thou hast done with him,
 for me!

Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
 Shall find performed thy special ministry,
 And time come for departure, thou, suspend-
 ing, 5

Thy flight, may'st see another child for tend-
 ing,

Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
 From where thou standest now, to where I
 gaze,

— And suddenly my head is covered o'er 10
 With those wings, white above the child
 who prays

Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee
 guarding

Me, out of all the world; for me, discarding
 Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes
 its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head 15
 Because the door opes, like that child, I
 know,

For I should have thy gracious face instead,
 Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend
 me low

Like him, and lay, like his, my hands to-
 gether,

And lift them up to pray, and gently tether 20
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's
 spread.

If this was ever granted, I would rest
 My head beneath thine, while thy healing
 hands

Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
 Pressing the brain, which too much thought
 expands, 25

Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
 Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
 And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

i.e., a highly respectable party is being given.

How soon all worldly wrong would be re-
 paired!

I think how I should view the earth and
 skies 30

And sea, when once again my brow was bared
 After thy healing, with such different eyes.

O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
 And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.

What further may be sought for or de-
 clared? 35

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
 (Alfred, ² dear friend!) — that little child to
 pray,

Holding the little hands up, each to each
 Pressed gently, — with his own head
 turned away

Over the earth where so much lay before
 him 40

Of work to do, though heaven was opening
 o'er him,

And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went
 To sit and see him in his chapel there,

And drink his beauty to our soul's content 45
 — My angel ² with me too: and since I care

For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
 And glory comes this picture for a dower,

Fraught with a pathos so magnificent) —

And since he did not work thus earnestly 50
 At all times, and has else endured some
 wrong —

I took one thought his picture struck from
 me,

And spread it out, translating it to song.
 My love is here. Where are you, dear old
 friend? 3

How rolls the Wairoa ⁴ at your world's far
 end? 55

This is Ancona,⁵ yonder is the sea.

Pub. 1855.

MEMORABILIA

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,
 And did he stop and speak to you,
 And did you speak to him again?
 How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that, 5
 And also you are living after;

¹ Alfred Domett, a close friend of Browning's in their
 younger days in London, at this time a Government
 official in New Zealand. Browning describes him in
Waring, which he wrote after Domett's departure from
 England.

² Mrs. Browning.

⁴ In New Zealand.

³ Alfred Domett.

⁵ A seaside city in Italy.

And the memory I started at —
My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
And a certain use in the world no doubt, 10
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather,
And there I put inside my breast,
A molted feather, an eagle feather! 15
Well, I forget the rest.
Pub. 1855.

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I said — Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
Since now at length my fate I know,
Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
Since this was written and needs must
be — 5
My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave, — I claim
Only a memory of the same,
— And this beside, if you will not blame, 10
Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two 15
With life or death in the balance: right!
The blood replenished me again;
My last thought was at least not vain:
I and my mistress, side by side
Shall be together, breathe and ride, 20
So, one day more am I deified.
Who knows but the world may end to-
night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
By many benedictions — sun's 25
And moon's and evening-star's at once —
And so, you, looking and loving best,
Conscious grew, your passion drew
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,
Down on you, near and yet more near, 30
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! —
Thus leant she and lingered — joy and fear!
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll 35
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss. 40
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds? 45
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,
As the world rushed by on either side.
I thought, — All labor, yet no less 50
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!
I hoped she would love me; here we ride. 55

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
We ride and I see her bosom heave. 60
There's many a crown for who can reach.
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
A soldier's doing! what atones?
They scratch his name on the Abbey 1
stones, 65
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
What we felt only; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best, 70
And place them in rhyme so, side by
side.

'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you — poor, sick, old ere your time —
Nearer one whit your own sublime 75
Than we who never have turned a rhyme?
Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor — so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,
And that's your Venus, whence we turn 80
To yonder girl that fords the burn!
You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
What, man of music, you grown gray
With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend, 85
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions end!"
I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

1 Westminster Abbey.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
 Proposed bliss here should sublimate 90
 My being — had I signed the bond —
 Still one must lead some life beyond,
 Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.
 This foot once planted on the goal,
 This glory-garland round my soul, 95
 Could I descry such? Try and test!
 I sink back shuddering from the quest.
 Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
 Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet — she has not spoke so long! 100
 What if heaven be that, fair and strong
 At life's best, with our eyes upturned
 Whither life's flower is first discerned,
 We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
 What if we still ride on, we two, 105
 With life forever old yet new,
 Changed not in kind but in degree,
 The instant made eternity, —
 And heaven just proved that I and she
 Ride, ride together, forever ride? 110

Pub. 1855.

A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARN-
 ING IN EUROPE

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
 Singing together.
 Leave we the common crofts,¹ the vulgar
 thorpes²
 Each in its tether
 Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain, 5
 Cared-for till cock-crow:
 Look out if yonder be not day again
 Rimming the rock-row!
 That's the appropriate country; there, man's
 thought,
 Rarer, intenser, 10
 Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
 Chafes in the censor.
 Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and
 crop;
 Seek we sepulture
 On a tall mountain, citied to the top, 15
 Crowded with culture!
 All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
 Clouds overcome it;
 No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
 Circling its summit. 20
 Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights;
 Wait ye the warning?
 Our low life was the level's and the night's;
 He's for the morning.

¹ small farms. ² villages.

Step to a tune, square chests, erect each
 head, 25
 'Ware the beholders!
 This is our master, famous, calm and dead,
 Borne on our shoulders.
 Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darling thorpe
 and croft,
 Safe from the weather! 30
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
 Singing together,
 He was a man born with thy face and throat,
 Lyric Apollo!
 Long he lived nameless: how should Spring
 take note 35
 Winter would follow?
 Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!
 Cramped and diminished,
 Moaned he, "New measures, other feet
 anon!
 My dance is finished"? 40
 No, that's the world's way: (keep the moun-
 tain-side,
 Make for the city!)
 He knew the signal, and stepped on with
 pride
 Over men's pity;
 Left play for work, and grappled with the
 world 45
 Bent on escaping:
 "What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou keep-
 est furled?
 Show me their shaping,
 Theirs who most studied man, the bard and
 sage, —
 Give!" — So, he gowned him; 50
 Straight got by heart that book to its last
 page:
 Learned, we found him.
 Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like
 lead,
 Accents uncertain:
 "Time to taste life," another would have
 said, 55
 "Up with the curtain!"
 This man said rather, "Actual life comes
 next?
 Patience a moment!
 Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed
 text,
 Still there's the comment. 60
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or
 least,
 Painful or easy!
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
 Ay, nor feel queasy."
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live, 65
 When he had learned it,

When he had gathered all books had to give!
 Sooner, he spurned it.
 Image the whole, then execute the parts —
 Fancy the fabric 70
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from
 quartz,
 Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the
 market-place

Gaping before us.)
 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace 75
 (Hearten our chorus!)

That before living he'd learn how to live —
 No end to learning:

Earn the means first — God surely will con-
 trive

Use for our earning. 80
 Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes:
 Live now or never!"

He said, "What's time? Leave Now for
 dogs and apes!

Man has Forever."
 Back to his book then: deeper drooped his
 head: 85

*Calculus*¹ racked him:
 Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:
*Tussis*² attacked him.

"Now, master, take a little rest!" — not
 he!

(Caution redoubled, 90
 Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)
 Not a whit troubled,

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
 Fierce as a dragon
 He (soul-hydroptic³ with a sacred thirst) 95
 Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
 Heedless of far gain,
 Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
 Bad is our bargain! 100

Was it not great? did he not throw on God,
 (He loves the burthen) —

God's task to make the heavenly period
 Perfect the earthen?
 Did he not magnify the mind, show clear 105
 Just what it all meant?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,
 Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing — heaven's
 success

Found, or earth's failure: 110
 "Wilt thou trust death or not?" He an-
 swered "Yes!

Hence with life's pale lure!"

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
 Sees it and does it:
 This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
 Dies ere he knows it. 116
 That low man goes on adding one to one,
 His hundred's soon hit:
 This high man, aiming at a million,
 Misses an unit. 120
 That, has the world here — should he need
 the next.

Let the world mind him!
 This, throws himself on God, and unper-
 plexed

Seeking shall find him.
 So, with the throttling hands of death at
 strife, 125

Ground he at grammar;
 Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were
 rife:

While he could stammer
 He settled *Hoti's* business — let it be! —
 Properly based *Oun* — 130

Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,¹
 Dead from the waist down.

Well, here's the platform, here's the proper
 place:

Hail to your purlieus,
 All ye highfliers of the feathered race, 135
 Swallows and curlews!

Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
 Live, for they can, there:

This man decided not to Live but Know —
 Bury this man there? 140

Here — here's his place, where meteors
 shoot, clouds form,

Lightnings are loosened,
 Stars come and go! Let joy break with the
 storm,

Peace let the dew send!
 Lofty designs must close in like effects: 145

Loftily lying,
 Leave him — still loftier than the world
 suspects,

Living and dying.

Pub. 1855.

THE STATUE AND THE BUST

Browning gave the following answers to ques-
 tions put to him regarding the poem: "1. 'This
 story the townsmen tell;' 'when, how, and
 where,' constitutes the subject of the poem.
 2. The lady was the wife of Riccardi; and the
 duke, Ferdinand, just as the poem says. 3. As
 it was built by, and inhabited by, the Medici

¹ Stones in the bladder or kidney, ² coughing.

³ Thirsty with a thirst that becomes more intense as
 one drinks.

¹ The three words are particles or enclitics in Greek
 which indicate fine shades of meaning. Browning's
 Grammarian was able to fix these nice discriminations.

till sold, long after, to the Riccardi, it was not from the duke's palace, but a window in that of the Riccardi, that the lady gazed at her lover riding by. The statue is still in its place, looking at the window under which 'now is the empty shrine.' Can anything be clearer?"

Note the use of the *terza rima* of Dante: *aba, bcb, cdc*, etc.

There's a palace in Florence, the world knows well,

And a statue watches it from the square,
And this story of both do our townsmen tell.

Agès ago, a lady there,
At the farthest window facing the East 5
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air?"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased;
She leaned forth, one on either hand;
They saw how the blush of the bride increased —

They felt by its beats her heart expand — 10
As one at each ear and both in a breath
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdinand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,
The Duke rode past in his idle way,
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath. 15

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,
Till he threw his head back — "Who is she?"
— "A bride the Riccardi brings home to-day."

Hair in heaps lay heavily
Over a pale brow spirit-pure — 20
Carved like the heart of the coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war-steed's encloùre —
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes
Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise 25
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man, —
The Duke grew straightway brave and wise.

He looked at her, as a lover can;
She looked at him, as one who awakes:
The past was a sleep, and her life began. 30

Now, love so ordered for both their sakes,
A feast was held that selfsame night
In the pile which the mighty shadow makes.

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,
But the palace overshadows one, 35
Because of a crime, which may God requite!

To Florence and God the wrong was done,
Through the first republic's murder there
By Cosimo¹ and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the square) 40

Turned in the midst of his multitude
At the bright approach of the bridal pair.

Face to face the lovers stood
A single minute and no more,
While the bridegroom bent as a man subdued — 45

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor —
For the Duke on the lady a kiss conferred,
As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word?
If a word did pass, which I do not think, 50
Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's brink
He and his bride were alone at last
In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast, 55
That the door she had passed was shut on her
Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir, 58
Through a certain window facing the East
She could watch like a convent's chronicler.

Since passing the door might lead to a feast,
And a feast might lead to so much beside,
He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride —
"Your window and its world suffice," 65
Replied the tongue, while the heart replied —

"If I spend the night with that devil twice,
May his window serve as my loop of hell
Whence a damned soul looks on paradise!

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well, 70
Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow
Ere I count another ave-bell.

"'Tis only the coat of a page to borrow,
And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim.
And I save my soul — but not to-morrow" — 75

¹ Cosimo de' Medici, 1389-1464, head of the Florentine Republic.

(She checked herself and her eye grew dim)
 "My father tarries to bless my state:
 I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait?
 Moreover the Duke rides past, I know; 80
 We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just so!
 So we resolve on a thing and sleep:
 So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or cheap 85
 As the cost of this cup of bliss may prove
 To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,
 He beckoned the bridegroom (close on call,
 As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove) 90

And smiled "'Twas a very funeral,
 Your lady will think, this feast of ours, —
 A shame to efface, whate'er befall!

"What if we break from the Arno bowers,
 And try if Petraja, cool and green, 95
 Cure last night's fault with this morning's
 flowers?"

The bridegroom, not a thought to be seen
 On his steady brow and quiet mouth,
 Said, "Too much favor for me so mean!

"But, alas! my lady leaves the South; 100
 Each wind that comes from the Apennine
 Is a menace to her tender youth:

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,
 If she quits her palace twice this year,
 To avert the flower of life's decline." 105

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly fear.
 Moreover Petraja is cold this spring;
 Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

And then to himself — "Which night shall
 bring
 Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool — 110
 Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor
 cool —
 For to-night the Envoy arrives from France
 Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my tool.

"I need thee still and might miss per-
 chance. 115

i. e., is from.

To-day is not wholly lost, beside,
 With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride — what should I do but ride?
 And passing her palace, if I list,
 May glance at its window — well betide!"

So said, so done: nor the lady missed 121
 One ray that broke from the ardent brow,
 Nor a curl of the lips where the spirit
 kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,
 No morrow's sun should arise and set 125
 And leave them then as it left them now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,
 With still fresh cause to wait one day more!
 Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore, 130
 With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,
 They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly,
 But not in despite of heaven and earth:
 The rose would blow when the storm passed
 by. 135

Meantime they could profit in winter's dearth
 By store of fruits that supplant the rose:
 The world and its ways have a certain worth:

And to press a point while these oppose 140
 Were simple policy; better wait:
 We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's fate,
 Who daily may ride and pass and look
 Where his lady watches behind the grate!

And she — she watched the square like a
 book 145
 Holding one picture and only one,
 Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book was
 done,
 And she turned from the picture at night to
 scheme
 Of tearing it out for herself next sun. 150

So weeks grew months, years; gleam by
 gleam
 The glory dropped from their youth and
 love,
 And both perceived they had dreamed a
 dream;

Which hovered as dreams do, still above:
But who can take a dream for a truth? 155
Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day as the lady saw her youth
Depart, and the silver thread that streaked
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so peaked, —
And wondered who the woman was; 161
Hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass —
"Summon here," she suddenly said,
"Before the rest of my old self pass, 165

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,
Who fashions the clay no love will change,
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let Robbia's * craft so apt and strange
Arrest the remains of young and fair, 170
And rivet them while the seasons range.

"Make me a face on the window there,
Waiting as ever, mute the while,
My love to pass below in the square!

"And let me think that it may beguile 175
Dreary days which the dead must spend
Down in their darkness under the aisle,

"To say, 'What matters it at the end?
I did no more while my heart was warm
Than does that image, my pale-faced friend.'

"Where is the use of lip's red charm, 181
The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,
And the blood that blues the inside arm —

"Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,
The earthly gift to an end divine? 185
A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,
With flowers and fruits which leaves enlase,
Was set where now is the empty shrine —

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space, 190
As a ghost might lean from a chink of sky,
The passionate pale lady's face —

Eying ever, with earnest eye
And quick-turned neck at its breathless
stretch,
Some one who ever is passing by —) 195

* Robbia made the bust, but which della Robbia is uncertain.

The Duke had sighed like the simplest wretch
In Florence, "Youth — my dream escapes!
Will its record stay?" And he bade them
fetch

Some subtle molder of brazen shapes —
"Can the soul, the will, die out of a man
Ere his body find the grave that gapes? 201

"John of Douay * shall effect my plan,
Set me on horseback here aloft,
Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

"In the very square I have crossed so
oft: 205
That men may admire, when future suns
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

"While the mouth and the brow stay brave
in bronze —
Admire and say, 'When he was alive
How he would take his pleasure once!' 210

"And it shall go hard but I contrive
To listen the while, and laugh in my tomb
At idleness which aspires to strive."

So! While these wait the trump of doom,
How do their spirits pass, I wonder, 215
Nights and days in the narrow room?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder
What a gift life was, ages ago,
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know, 220
Nor all that chivalry of his,
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss —
Since, the end of life being manifest,
He had burned his way through the world to
this. 225

I hear you reproach, "But delay was best,
For their end was a crime." — Oh, a crime
will do
As well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,
Sufficient to vindicate itself 230
And prove its worth at a moment's view!

Must a game be played for the sake of
pelf?

Where a button goes, 'twere an epigram
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.

* A sculptor from Bologna, who made the statue in 1608.

The true has no value beyond the sham: 235
 As well the counter as coin, I submit,
 When your table's a hat, and your prize, a
 dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,
 Venture as warily, use the same skill, 239
 Do your best, whether winning or losing it,

If you choose to play! — is my principle.
 Let a man contend to the uttermost
 For his life's set prize, be it what it will!

The counter our lovers staked was lost
 As surely as if it were lawful coin: 245
 And the sin I impute to each frustrate
 ghost

Is — the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
 Though the end in sight was a vice, I say.
 You of the virtue (we issue join)
 How strive you? *De te, fabula!* 250

Pub. 1855.

"CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME"

See Edgar's song in *Lear*

Childe Roland, a knight on a journey to a
 strange dark tower, which other knights have
 failed to reach, recounts the difficulties of his
 quest. The poem takes up the story after Childe
 Roland has received suspicious directions from a
 hoary cripple.

Browning said several times that *Childe Ro-*
land was not an allegory, but simply an imagina-

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
 That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
 Askance to watch the working of his lie
 On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
 Suppression of the glee, that pursed and
 scored 5
 Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his
 staff?

What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
 All travellers who might find him posted
 there,
 And ask the road? I guessed what skull-
 like laugh 10

1 This is your story.

Would break, what crutch 'gin write my
 epitaph
 For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

If at his counsel I should turn aside
 Into that ominous tract which, all agree,
 Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquiesc-
 ingly 15

I did turn as he pointed: neither pride
 Nor hope rekindling at the end desried,
 So much as gladness that some end might
 be.

For, what with my whole world-wide wander-
 ing,

What with my search drawn out through
 years, my hope 20
 Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
 With that obstreperous joy success would
 bring, —

I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
 My heart made, finding failure in its scope.

As when a sick man very near to death 25
 Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and
 end

The tears, and takes the farewell of each
 friend,

And hears one bid the other go, draw breath
 Freelier outside, ("since all is o'er," he saith,
 "And the blow fallen no grieving can
 amend;") 30

While some discuss if near the other graves
 Be room enough for this, and when a
 day

Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
 With care about the banners, scarves and
 staves:

And still the man hears all, and only craves 35
 He may not shame such tender love and
 stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,
 Heard failure prophesied so oft, been
 writ

So many times among "The Band" — to
 wit,

The knights who to the Dark Tower's search
 addressed 40

Their steps — that just to fail as they, seemed
 best,

And all the doubt was now — should I be
 fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
 That hateful cripple, out of his highway
 Into the path he pointed. All the day 45

Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.¹

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two, 50
Than, pausing to throw backward a last
view
O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray plain all
round:
Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on; naught else remained to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw 55
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing
throve:

For flowers — as well expect a cedar grove!
But cockle, spurge,² according to their law
Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
You'd think: a burr had been a treasure
trove. 60

No! penury, inertness and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's por-
tion. "See

Or shut your eyes," said Nature peevishly,
"It nothing skills: I cannot help my case:
'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure this
place, 65
Calcine³ its clods and set my prisoners free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chopped;
the bents⁴
Were jealous else. What made those holes
and rents
In the dock's⁵ harsh swarth leaves, bruised as
to balk 70
All hope of greenness? 'tis a brute must walk
Pushing⁶ their life out, with a brute's in-
tents.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the mud
Which underneath looked kneaded up with
blood. 75
One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
Stood stupefied, however he came there:
Thrust out past service from the devil's
stud!

Alive? he might be dead for aught I know,
With that red gaunt and colloped⁷ neck a-
strain, 80

And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
Seldom went such grotesqueness with such
woe;
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my
heart. 85
As a man calls for wine before he fights,
I asked one draught of earlier, happier
sights,
Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterwards — the soldier's
art:
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face 91
Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's dis-
grace. 95
Out went my heart's new fire and left it
cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor — there he
stands
Frank as ten years ago when knighted
first.
What honest man should dare (he said) he
durst.
Good — but the scene shifts — faugh! what
hangman hands 100
Pin to his breast a parchment? His own
bands
Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and
curst!

Better this present than a past like that;
Back therefore to my darkening path
again!
No sound, no sight as far as eye could
strain. 105
Will the night send a howlet or a bat?
I asked: when something on the dismal flat
Came to arrest my thoughts and change
their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes. 110
No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms;
This, as it frothed by, might have been a
bath
For the fiend's glowing hoof — to see the
wrath
Of its black eddy bespate¹ with flakes and
spumes.

1 spattered.

1 wanderer.
2 Cockle and spurge are common wild shrubs.
3 Pulverize by heat. 4 Tough grasses.
5 A generic term for a certain group of weeds.
6 crushing. 7 Having ridges of flesh.

So petty yet so spiteful! All along, 115
 Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
 Drenched willows flung them headlong in
 a fit

Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:
 The river which had done them all the wrong,
 Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no
 whit. 120

Which, while I forded, — good saints, how I
 feared

To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
 Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to
 seek

For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
 — It may have been a water-rat I speared, 125
 But, ugh! it sounded like a baby's shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
 Now for a better country. Vain presage!
 Who were the strugglers, what war did
 they wage,

Whose savage trample thus could pad the
 dank 130

Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned tank,
 Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage —

The fight must so have seemed in that fell
 cirque.

What penned them there, with all the
 plain to choose? 134

No footprint leading to that horrid mews,
 None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
 Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the
 Turk

Pits for his pastime, Christians against
 Jews.

And more than that — a furlong on — why,
 there!

What bad use was that engine for, that
 wheel, 140

Or brake, not wheel — that harrow fit to
 reel

Men's bodies out like silk? with all the air
 Of Tophet's¹ tool, on earth left unaware,
 Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of
 steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a
 wood, 145

Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere
 earth

Desperate and done with: (so a fool finds
 mirth,

Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood

¹ In the Old Testament, a valley where children were
 sacrificed by fire.

Changes and off he goes!) within a rood —
 Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark black
 dearth. 150

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and grim,
 Now patches where some leanness of the
 soil's

Broke into moss or substances like boils;
 Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in him
 Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim 155
 Gaping at death, and dies while it recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end!
 Naught in the distance but the evening,
 naught

To point my footstep further! At the
 thought, 159

A great black bird, Apollyon's¹ bosom-friend,
 Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing dragon-
 penned

That brushed my cap — perchance the
 guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
 'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given place
 All round to mountains — with such
 name to grace 165

Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen in
 view.

How thus they had surprised me, — solve it,
 you!

How to get from them was no clearer case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
 Of mischief happened to me, God knows
 when — 170

In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended, then,
 Progress this way. When, in the very nick
 Of giving up, one time more, came a click
 As when a trap shuts — you're inside the
 den!

Burningly it came on me all at once, 175
 This was the place! those two hills on the
 right,

Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn
 in fight;

While to the left, a tall scalped mountain . . .
 Dunce,

Dotard, a-doing at the very nonce,
 After a life spent training for the sight! 180

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
 The round squat turret, blind as the fool's
 heart,

Built of brown stone, without a counter-
 part

¹ The angel of the bottomless pit. (Rev. ix, ii).

In the whole world. The tempest's mocking
elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
He strikes on, only when the timbers
start. 186

Not see? because of night perhaps? — why,
day
Come back again for that! before it left,
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay, 190
Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay, —
"Now stab and end the creature — to the
heft!"

Not hear? when noise was everywhere! it
told
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears,
Of all the lost adventurers my peers, —
How such a one was strong, and such was
bold, 196
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of
years.

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides,
met
To view the last of me, a living frame 200
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew. "*Childe Roland to the Dark
Tower came.*"

Pub. 1855.

FRA LIPPO LIPPI

Fra Lippo, a painter-monk, relates the story
of his life and his philosophy to the watchmen
who have just arrested him as he was stealing
back, after a night of roistering, to his room in
the Medici Palace.

Browning's source for this poem, as for most
of his poems about painters, is Vasari's *Lives of
the Painters*.

I am poor brother Lippo, by your leave!
You need not clap your torches to my face.
Zooks, what's to blame? you think you see a
monk!
What, 'tis past midnight, and you go the
rounds,
And here you catch me at an alley's end 5
Where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar?
The Carmine's my cloister: hunt it up,
Do, — harry out, if you must show your
zeal,
Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong hole,
And nip each softling of a wee white mouse,

Weke, weke, that's crept to keep him com-
pany! 11

Aha, you know your betters! Then, you'll
take

Your hand away that's fiddling on my throat,
And please to know me likewise. Who am I?
Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a friend 15
Three streets off — he's a certain . . . how
d'y'e call?

Master — a . . . Cosimo of the Medici,¹
I' the house that caps the corner. Boh! you
were best!

Remember and tell me, the day you're
hanged,

How you affected such a gullet's-gripe! 20
But you, sir, it concerns you that your
knaves

Pick up a manner nor discredit you:
Zooks, are we pilchards,² that they sweep the
streets

And count fair prize what comes into their
net?

He's Judas to a tittle, that man is! 25
Just such a face! Why, sir, you make
amends.

Lord, I'm not angry! Bid your hangdogs go
Drink out this quarter-florin to the health
Of the munificent House that harbors me
(And many more beside, lads! more beside!)
And all's come square again. I'd like his
face — 31

His, elbowing on his comrade in the door
With the pike and lantern, — for the slave
that holds

John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair 3
With one hand ("Look you, now," as who
should say) 35

And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped!
It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk,
A wood-coal or the like? or you should see!
Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.
What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down,
You know them and they take you? like
enough! 41

I saw the proper twinkle in your eye —
'Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.
Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to
haunch.

Here's spring come, and the nights one makes
up bands 45

To roam the town and sing out carnival,
And I've been three weeks shut within my
mew,

A-painting for the great man, saints and
saints

¹ Cosimo de' Medici. See *The Statue and the Bust*.

² A pilchard is an English fish resembling a herring.

³ Lippi is describing a picture.

And saints again. I could not paint all night —

Ouf! I leaned out of window for fresh air. 50
There came a hurry of feet and little feet,
A sweep of lute-strings, laughs, and whiffs of song, —

Flower o' the broom,
Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!
Flower o' the quince, 55
I let Lisa go, and what good in life since?
Flower o' the thyme — and so on. Round they went.

Scarce had they turned the corner when a titter

Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight, —
three slim shapes,

And a face that looked up . . . zooks, sir,
flesh and blood, 60

That's all I'm made of! Into shreds it went,
Curtain and counterpane and coverlet,
All the bed-furniture — a dozen knots,
There was a ladder! Down I let myself,
Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and
so dropped, 65

And after them. I came up with the fun
Hard by Saint Laurence,¹ hail fellow, well met, —

Flower o' the rose,
If I've been merry, what matter who knows?
And so as I was stealing back again 70

To get to bed and have a bit of sleep
Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work
On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast
With his great round stone to subdue the flesh,
You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see! 75
Though your eye twinkles still, you shake
your head —

Mine's shaved — a monk, you say — the
sting's in that!

If Master Cosimo announced himself,
Mum's the word naturally; but a monk!
Come, what am I a beast for? tell us, now! 80
I was a baby when my mother died
And father died and left me in the street.
I starved there, God knows how, a year or
two

On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and
shucks,

Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day, 85
My stomach being empty as your hat,
The wind doubled me up and down I went.
Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one
hand,

(Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)
And so along the wall, over the bridge, 90
By the straight cut to the convent. Six
words there,

While I stood munching my first bread that
month:

"So boy, you're minded," quoth the good fat
father,

Wiping his own mouth, 'twas refection-
time, —

"To quit this very miserable world? 95
Will you renounce" . . . "the mouthful of
bread?" thought I;

By no means! Brief, they made a monk of
me;

I did renounce the world, its pride and greed,
Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-house,
Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici 100
Have given their hearts to — all at eight
years old.

Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure,
'Twas not for nothing — the good bellyful,
The warm serge and the rope that goes all
round,

And day-long blessed idleness beside! 105
"Let's see what the urchin's fit for" — that
came next.

Not overmuch their way, I must confess.
Such a to-do! They tried me with their
books;

Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in pure
waste!

Flower o' the clove, 110
All the Latin I construe is "amo," I love!

But, mind you, when a boy starves in the
streets

Eight years together, as my fortune was,
Watching folk's faces to know who will fling
The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he
desires, 115

And who will curse or kick him for his pains, —
Which gentleman processional and fine,
Holding a candle to the Sacrament,
Will wink and let him lift a plate and catch
The droppings of the wax to sell again, 120
Or holla for the Eight² and have him
whipped, —

How say I? — nay, which dog bites, which
lets drop

His bone from the heap of offal in the
street, —

Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp alike,
He learns the look of things, and none the
less 125

For admonition from the hunger-pinch.
I had a store of such remarks, be sure,
Which, after I found leisure, turned to use.
I drew men's faces on my copy-books,
Scrawled them within the antiphony's²
marge, 130

¹ The church of San Lorenzo.

¹ The city magistrates of Florence.
² hymn-book.

Joined legs and arms to the long music-notes,
Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and B's,
And made a string of pictures of the world
Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun,
On the wall, the bench, the door. The
monks looked black. 135

"Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out, d'y'e
say?"

In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a lark.
What if at last we get our man of parts,
We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese
And Preaching Friars,¹ to do our church up
fine 140

And put the front on it that ought to be!"
And hereupon he bade me daub away.
Thank you! my head being crammed, the
walls a blank,

Never was such prompt disembodying.
First, every sort of monk, the black and
white, 145

I drew them, fat and lean: then, folk at
church,

From good old gossips waiting to confess
Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-
ends, —

To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot,
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting
there 150

With the little children round him in a row
Of admiration, half for his beard and half
For that white anger of his victim's son
Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm,
Signing himself with the other because of
Christ 155

(Whose sad face on the cross sees only this
After the passion of a thousand years)
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head,
(Which the intense eyes looked through)
came at eve

On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf, 160
Her pair of earrings and a bunch of flowers
(The brute took growling), prayed, and so
was gone.

I painted all, then cried "'Tis ask and have;
Choose, for more's ready!" — laid the ladder
flat,

And showed my covered bit of cloister-wall.
The monks closed in a circle and praised
loud 166

Till checked, taught what to see and not to
see,

Being simple bodies, — "That's the very
man!"

Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog!
That woman's like the Prior's niece who
comes 170

To care about his asthma: it's the life!"

1 The Dominicans.

But there my triumph's straw-fire flared and
funked;

Their betters took their turn to see and say:
The Prior and the learned pulled a face
And stopped all that in no time. "How?
what's here?" 175

Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all!
Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true
As much as pea and pea! it's devil's-game!
Your business is not to catch men with show,
With homage to the perishable clay, 180
But lift them over it, ignore it all,
Make them forget there's such a thing as
flesh.

Your business is to paint the souls of men —
Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke . . . no, it's
not . . .

It's vapor done up like a new-born babe —
(In that shape when you die it leaves your
mouth) 186

It's . . . well, what matters talking, it's the
soul!

Give us no more of body than shows soul!
Here's Giotto,¹ with his Saint a-praising God,
That sets us praising, — why not stop with
him? 190

Why put all thoughts of praise out of our
head

With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?
Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!
Rub all out, try at it a second time.

Oh, that white smallish female with the
breasts, 195

She's just my niece . . . Herodias,² I would
say, —

Who went and danced and got men's heads
cut off!

Have it all out!" Now, is this sense, I ask?
A fine way to paint soul, by painting body
So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go
further 200

And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow does for
white

When what you put for yellow's simply
black,

And any sort of meaning looks intense
When all beside itself means and looks
naught. 204

Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
Both in their order? Take the prettiest face,
The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint — is it so
pretty

You can't discover if it means hope, fear, 210

1 Giotto di Bordone, 1266-1337, the famous Italian
painter and architect.

2 For dancing before Herod, she was given John the
Baptist's head. See Saint Matthew, XIV, 3-12.

Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with these?
Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,
Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,
And then add soul and heighten them three-
fold?

Or say there's beauty with no soul at all — 215
(I never saw it — put the case the same —)
If you get simple beauty and naught else,
You get about the best thing God invents:
That's somewhat: and you'll find the soul you
have missed,

Within yourself, when you return him thanks.
"Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my life,
in short, 221

And so the thing has gone on ever since.
I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken
bounds:

You should not take a fellow eight years old
And make him swear to never kiss the
girls. 225

I'm my own master, paint now as I please —
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-
house!

Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front —
Those great rings serve more purposes than
just

To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse! 230
And yet the old schooling sticks, the old
grave eyes

Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,
The heads shake still — "It's art's decline,
my son!

You're not of the true painters, great and old;
Brother Angelico's¹ the man, you'll find; 235
Brother Lorenzo² stands his single peer:

Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the third!"
Flower o' the pine,

*You keep your mistr . . . manners, and I'll
stick to mine!*

I'm not the third, then: bless us, they must
know! 240

Don't you think they're the likeliest to
know,

They with their Latin? So, I swallow my
rage,

Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight, and
paint

To please them — sometimes do and some-
times don't;

For, doing most, there's pretty sure to come
A turn, some warm eve finds me at my
saints — 246

A laugh, a cry, the business of the world —
(*Flower o' the peach,*

Death for us all, and his own life for each!)

And my whole soul revolves, the cup runs
over, 250

The world and life's too big to pass for a
dream,

And I do these wild things in sheer despite,
And play the fooleries you catch me at,
In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out at
grass

After hard years, throws up his stiff heels so,
Although the miller does not preach to
him 256

The only good of grass is to make chaff.
What would men have? Do they like grass
or no —

May they or mayn't they? all I want's the
thing

Settled for ever one way. As it is, 260

You tell too many lies and hurt yourself:
You don't like what you only like too much,
You do like what, if given you at your word,
You find abundantly detestable.

For me, I think I speak as I was taught; 265
I always see the garden and God there
A-making man's wife: and, my lesson learned,
The value and significance of flesh,
I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I know.
But see, now — why, I see as certainly 271
As that the morning-star's about to shine,
What will hap some day. We've a youngster
here

Comes to our convent, studies what I do,
Slouches and stares and lets no atom drop:
His name is Guidi³ — he'll not mind the
monks — 276

They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them
talk —

He picks my practice up — he'll paint apace,
I hope so — though I never live so long,
I know what's sure to follow. You be judge!

You speak no Latin more than I, belike; 281
However, you're my man, you've seen the
world

— The beauty and the wonder and the
power,

The shapes of things, their colors, lights and
shades,

Changes, surprises, — and God made it all!

— For what? Do you feel thankful, ay or
no, 286

For this fair town's face, yonder river's line,
The mountain round it and the sky above,
Much more the figures of man, woman, child,
These are the frame to? What's it all
about? 290

¹ Fra Angelico, 1387-1455, a deeply religious, spiritual painter.

² Fra Lorenzo, another painter-monk.

³ Tommaso Guidi, painter and monk, more likely the teacher of Lippi, and not, as here, the pupil.

To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,
Wondered at? oh, this last of course! — you
say.

But why not do as well as say, — paint these
Just as they are, careless what comes of it?
God's works — paint any one, and count it
crime

To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His
works

Are here already; nature is complete:
Suppose you reproduce her — (which you
can't)

There's no advantage! you must beat her,
then."

For, don't you mark? we're made so that we
love

First when we see them painted, things we
have passed

Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better, painted — better to
us,

Which is the same thing. Art was given for
that;

God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out. Have you noticed,
now,

Your cullion's¹ hanging face? A bit of
chalk,

And trust me but you should, though! How
much more,

If I drew higher things with the same truth!
That were to take the Prior's pulpit-place,
Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,

It makes me mad to see what men shall do
And we in our graves! This world's no blot
for us,

Nor blank; it means intensely, and means
good:

To find its meaning is my meat and drink.
"Ay, but you don't so instigate to prayer!"
Strikes in the Prior: "when your meaning's
plain

It does not say to folk — remember matins,
Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why, for
this

What need of art at all? A skull and bones,
Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or, what's
best,

A bell to chime the hour with, does as well.
I painted a Saint Laurence six months since
At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine style:
"How looks my painting, now the scaffold's
down?"

I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns —
"Already not one phiz of your three slaves
Who turn the Deacon² off his toasted side,

But's scratched and prodded to our heart's
content,

The pious people have so eased their own
With coming to say prayers there in a rage:
We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.
Expect another job this time next year,
For pity and religion grow i' the crowd —
Your painting serves its purpose!" Hang
the fools!

— That is — you'll not mistake an idle
word

Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God wot,
Tasting the air this spicy night which turns
The unaccustomed head like Chianti wine!
Oh, the church knows! don't misreport me,
now!

It's natural a poor monk out of bounds
Should have his apt word to excuse himself:
And hearken how I plot to make amends.

I have bethought me: I shall paint a piece
... There's for you! Give me six months,
then go, see

Something in Sant' Ambrogio's!¹ Bless the
nuns!

They want a cast o' my office. I shall paint
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood,
Lilies and vestments and white faces, sweet
As puff on puff of grated orris-root
When ladies crowd to Church at midsummer.
And then i' the front, of course a saint or
two —

Saint John, because he saves the Florentines,
Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black and
white

The convent's friends and gives them a long
day,

And Job, I must have him there past mis-
take,

The man of Uz² (and Us without the z,
Painters who need his patience). Well, all
these

Secured at their devotion, up shall come
Out of a corner when you least expect,
As one by a dark stair into a great light,
Music and talking, who but Lippo! I! —
Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck — I'm
the man!

Back I shrink — what is this I see and hear?
I, caught up with my monk's-things by mis-
take,

My old serge gown and rope that goes all
round,

I, in this presence, this pure company!

¹ St. Ambrose's, a Florentine convent.

² "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was
Job." — Job 1, 1.

¹ base fellow's.

² St. Lawrence was roasted to death on a gridiron.

Where's a hole, where's a corner for escape?
Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing 370
Forward, puts out a soft palm — "Not so fast!"

— Addresses the celestial presence, "nay —
He made you and devised you, after all,
Though he's none of you! Could Saint
John there draw —

His camel-hair make up a painting-brush?
We come to brother Lippo for all that, 376
Iste perfecit opus!"¹ So, all smile —

I shuffle sideways with my blushing face
Under the cover of a hundred wings
Thrown like a spread of kirtles when you're
gay 380

And play hot cockles, all the doors being
shut,

Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops
The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle off
To some safe bench behind, not letting go
The palm of her, the little lily thing 385
That spoke the good word for me in the
nick,

Like the Prior's niece . . . Saint Lucy, I would
say.

And so all's saved for me, and for the church
A pretty picture gained. Go, six months
hence!

Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights, no
lights! 390

The street's hushed, and I know my own way
back,

Don't fear me! There's the gray beginning.
Zooks!

Pub. 1855.

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

Andrea, the painter with flawless technique,
addresses his wife, Lucrezia.

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your
heart?

I'll work then for your friend's friend, never
fear, 5

Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him, — but to-morrow,
Love! 10

I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems

1 He painted the picture.

As if — forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole, 15
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this! 20
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls
inside.

Don't count the time lost, neither; you must
serve

For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model. So! keep looking so — 25
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
— How could you ever prick those perfect
ears,

Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet —
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his, 30
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's: very dear, no
less.

You smile? why, there's my picture ready
made,

There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common grayness silvers everything, — 35
All in a twilight, you and I alike
— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know), — but I, at every
point;

My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned
down

To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole. 40
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days de-
crease,

And autumn grows, autumn in everything. 45
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's
hand.

How strange now looks the life he makes us
lead; 50

So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example — turn your
head —

All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art, 55
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, the second from the door
— It is the thing, Love! so such thing should
be —

Behold Madonna! — I am bold to say.
 I can do with my pencil what I know, 60
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep —
 Do easily, too — when I say, perfectly,
 I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,
 Who listened to the Legate's talk last
 week, 65

And just as much they used to say in France.
 At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
 No sketches first, no studies, that's long
 past:

I do what many dream of all their lives,
 — Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do, 70
 And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
 On twice your fingers, and not leave this
 town,

Who strive — you don't know how the others
 strive

To paint a little thing like that you smeared
 Carelessly passing with your robes afloat, —
 Yet do much less, so much less, Someone
 says, 76

(I know his name, no matter) — so much
 less!

Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
 There burns a truer light of God in them,
 In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-
 up brain, 80

Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to
 prompt

This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand
 of mine.

Their works drop groundward, but them-
 selves, I know,

Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to
 me,

Enter and take their place there sure
 enough, 85

Though they come back and cannot tell the
 world.

My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
 The sudden blood of these men! at a word —
 Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils
 too.

I, painting from myself and to myself, 90
 Know what I do, am unmoved by men's
 blame

Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
 Morello's ¹ outline there is wrongly traced,
 His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
 Rightly traced and well ordered; what of
 that? 95

Speak as they please, what does the moun-
 tain care?

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his
 grasp,

¹ One of the peaks of the Apennines.

Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray
 Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
 I know both what I want and what might
 gain, 100

And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
 "Had I been two, another and myself,
 Our head would have o'erlooked the world!"
 No doubt.

Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
 The Urbinate ² who died five years ago. 105
 ('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
 Well, I can fancy how he did it all,

Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
 Reaching, that heaven might so replenish
 him,

Above and through his art — for it gives
 way; 110

That arm is' wrongly put — and there
 again —

A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
 Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
 He means right — that, a child may under-
 stand.

Still, what an arm! and I could alter it: 115
 But all the play, the insight and the
 stretch —

Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
 Had you enjoined them on me, given me
 soul,

We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
 Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I
 think — 120

More than I merit, yes, by many times.
 But had you — oh, with the same perfect
 brow,

And perfect eyes, and more than perfect
 mouth,

And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
 The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare —
 Had you, with these the same, but brought
 a mind! 126

Some women do so. Had the mouth there
 urged

"God and the glory! never care for gain.
 The present by the future, what is that?
 Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!" 130
 Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"

I might have done it for you. So it seems:
 Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
 Besides, incentives come from the soul's self;
 The rest avail not. Why do I need you? 135
 What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?

In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
 And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
 Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat, too,
 the power —

¹ The painter Raphael, 1483-1520, born in Urbino.

² Michael Angelo, 1475-1564.

And thus we half-men struggle. At the
 end, 140
 God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
 'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
 That I am something underrated here,
 Poor this long while, despised, to speak the
 truth.
 I dared not, do you know, leave home all
 day, 145
 For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
 The best is when they pass and look aside;
 But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
 Well may they speak! That Francis,¹ that
 first time,
 And that long festal year at Fontaine-
 bleau! 150
 I surely then could sometimes leave the
 ground,
 Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
 In that humane great monarch's golden
 look, —
 One finger in his beard or twisted curl
 Over his mouth's good mark that made the
 smile, 155
 One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
 The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
 I painting proudly with his breath on me,
 All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
 Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of
 souls 160
 Profuse, my hand kept plying by those
 hearts, —
 And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
 This in the background, waiting on my work,
 To crown the issue with a last reward!
 A good time, was it not, my kingly days? 165
 And had you not grown restless . . . but I
 know —
 'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct
 said;
 Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
 And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should
 tempt
 Out of the grange whose four walls make his
 world. 170
 How could it end in any other way?
 You called me, and I came home to your
 heart.
 The triumph was — to reach and stay there;
 since
 I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
 Let my hands frame your face in your hair's
 gold, 175
 You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!

¹ King Francis I of France. In 1518 Andrea lived in France as painter to the king. He returned to Italy, at the wish of his wife and, according to one story, built a house for himself with money entrusted to him by the king for the buying of pictures.

"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
 The Roman's is the better when you pray,
 But still the other's Virgin was his wife" —
 Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge 180
 Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
 My better fortune, I resolve to think.
 For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
 Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
 To Rafael . . . I have known it all these
 years . . . 185
 (When the young man was flaming out his
 thoughts
 Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
 Too lifted up in heart because of it)
 "Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
 Goes up and down our Florence, none cares
 how, 190
 Who, were he set to plan and execute
 As you are, pricked on by your popes and
 kings,
 Would bring the sweat into that brow of
 yours!"
 To Rafael's! — And indeed the arm is
 wrong.
 I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see, 195
 Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line
 should go!
 Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
 Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
 (What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
 Do you forget already words like those?) 200
 If really there was such a chance, so lost, —
 Is, whether you're — not grateful — but
 more pleased.
 Well, let me think so. And you smile in-
 deed!
 This hour has been an hour! Another
 smile?
 If you would sit thus by me every night 205
 I should work better, do you comprehend?
 I mean that I should earn more, give you
 more.
 See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;
 Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the
 wall,
 The cue-owls speak the name² we call them
 by. 210
 Come from the window, love, — come in, at
 last,
 Inside the melancholy little house
 We built to be so gay with. God is just.
 King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
 When I look up from painting, eyes tired
 out, 215
 The walls become illumined, brick from
 brick
 Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,

² Italian *città*.

That gold of his I did cement them with!
 Let us but love each other. Must you go?
 That Cousin here again? he waits outside? 220
 Must see you — you, and not with me?
 Those loans?

More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for
 that?

Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to
 spend?

While hand and eye and something of a
 heart

Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it
 worth? 225

I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
 The gray remainder of the evening out,
 Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
 How I could paint, were I but back in
 France,

One picture, just one more — the Virgin's
 face, 230

Not yours this time! I want you at my side
 To hear them — that is, Michel Agnolo —
 Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.

Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
 I take the subjects for his corridor, 235

Finish the portrait out of hand — there,
 there,

And throw him in another thing or two
 If he demurs; the whole should prove enough
 To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
 What's better and what's all I care about, 240
 Get you the thirteen scudi^x for the ruff!

Love, does that please you? Ah, but what
 does he,

The Cousin! what does he to please you
 more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
 I regret little, I would change still less. 245

Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
 The very wrong to Francis! — it is true

I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
 And built this house and sinned, and all is
 said.

My father and my mother died of want. 250
 Well, had I riches of my own? you see

How one gets rich! Let each one bear his
 lot.

They were born poor, lived poor, and poor
 they died:

And I have labored somewhat in my time
 And not been paid profusely. Some good
 son 255

Paint my two hundred pictures — let him
 try!

No doubt, there's something strikes a bal-
 ance. Yes,

^x A scudo is worth a little less than a dollar.

You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
 This must suffice me here. What would one
 have?

In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more
 chance — 260

Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
 Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
 For Leonard,¹ Rafael, Agnolo and me
 To cover — the three first without a wife,
 While I have mine! So — still they over-
 come 265

Because there's still Lucrezia, — as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

Pub. 1855.

PROSPICE²

This poem was written a few months after
 Mrs. Browning's death. The concluding lines
 refer to her.

Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
 The mist in my face,

When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
 I am nearing the place,

The power of the night, the press of the
 storm, 5

The post of the foe;
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible
 form,

Yet the strong man must go:
 For the journey is done and the summit
 attained,

And the barriers fall, 10
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be
 gained,

The reward of it all.
 I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,
 The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes,
 and forbore, 15

And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my
 peers

The heroes of old,
 Bear the brunt, in a minute pay life's glad
 arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold. 20
 For sudden the worst turns the best to the
 brave,

The black minute's at end,
 And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that
 rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,
 Shall change, shall become first a peace out
 of pain, 25

¹ Leonardo da Vinci, 1452-1519.

² "Look forward."

Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee
again,
And with God be the rest!
1861.

EPILOGUE

Epilogue is the last poem in Browning's last volume, a collection of disconnected verses brought together under the title *Asolando*. The book appeared on the day that Browning died. (It is dated, however, 1890.)

At the midnight in the silence of the sleeptime,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where — by death, fools
think, imprisoned —
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom
you loved so,
— Pity me? 5

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do

With the slothful, with the mawkish, the
unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I
drivel
— Being — who? 10

One who never turned his back but marched
breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted,
wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake. 15

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-
time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either
should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed, — fight
on, fare ever
There as here!" 20

1889.

JOHN RUSKIN (1819-1900)

John Ruskin was born in London, February 8, 1819. His father was a Scotchman who had built up a prosperous wine business in London. As an only child, John Ruskin was given a strictly private education, the best part of which consisted of journeys by carriage about England and Scotland and on the continent. When he was fourteen he had his first glimpse of the Alps from the terrace at Schaffhausen whence he came down with "my destiny fixed in all of it that was to be sacred and useful." He attended Christ Church College, Oxford, and in an interval of ill health spent two years in the study of the pre-Raphaelite painters of Italy. He took his degree in 1842, and three years later published the first volume of *Modern Painters*. Ruskin early came under the influence of Carlyle, whose disciple and interpreter he professed himself. He was engaged with Thomas Hughes, the Reverend F. D. Maurice, and others in founding a Working Men's College in London. As a teacher of art he considered that his first business was to endeavor to bring about such conditions in society that worthy art would be possible, art growing directly out of and expressing the life of the people, and not mere decoration as a matter of individual luxury. He therefore devoted himself more and more to social criticism. In 1869 he was elected Slade Professor of Art at Oxford, where his lectures were on a great variety of aspects of life. Instead of setting his pupils to draw and paint, he led them out to repair roads. He engaged in a number of other social experiments, model housing, Saint George's Guild, etc., on which he spent the large fortune left him by his father. The failure of these plans, and the complacency of his prosperous countrymen who would not be stirred to similar activity in behalf of the suffering and submerged class, wore upon his spirit. He became subject to attacks of brain fever, and after 1884 he retired to Brantwood, an estate which he had purchased on Coniston Lake, where he died in 1900.

Ruskin's work falls into two periods, the first including *Modern Painters* (1845-60), *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), and *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53). The second period begins with *The Political Economy of Art*, later called *A Joy Forever* (1857). It includes two works on political economy, *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris, Sesame and Lilies* (1864), *The Crown of Wild Olive*, consisting of three lectures on Work, Traffic and War, (1866), *Fors Clavigera* (1871-84). His last work was a delightful autobiography called *Praterita* (1889).

Ruskin's earlier style was modeled on the English prose of the seventeenth century. It was highly elaborate and rhetorical, dazzling by sheer abundance. His later writing was restrained to a grave and somber eloquence, in which the matchless sense of cadence of his earlier sentences played its part. Nothing more moving has been written in prose in the nineteenth century than Ruskin's pleading for a social life animated by sincerity, compassion, and beauty.

The *Life of John Ruskin*, by Sir E. T. Cook, is the chief authority. For his art and art theories, Professor Charles Waldstein's *The Work of John Ruskin*, and for his social theories Mr. John A. Hobson's *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*, should be consulted. Volumes of selections have been edited by Professor Chauncey Tinker (Houghton Mifflin Company) and Professor Vida Scudder.

THE STONES OF VENICE

1851-53

THE NATURE OF GOTHIC

This selection is the first part of Chapter VI, Volume II, of *The Stones of Venice*. It illustrates Ruskin's view that the art and particularly the architecture of a people is an expression "of their religion, their morality, their national aspirations and social habits." Fine art is thus dependent upon the social system of the people who produce it, and its worth or unworth is the final test of that system. The chapter thus marks the connection between Ruskin's art criticism and the social criticism which he was to make his chief work during the latter part of his life.

I shall endeavor to give the reader in this chapter an idea, at once broad and definite, of the true nature of *Gothic* architecture, properly so called; not of that of Venice only, but of universal Gothic: for it will be one of the most interesting parts of our subsequent inquiry, to find out how far Venetian architecture reached the universal or perfect type of Gothic, and how far it either fell short of it, or assumed foreign and independent forms.

§ II. The principal difficulty in doing this arises from the fact that every building of the Gothic period differs in some important respect from every other; and many include features which, if they occurred in other buildings, would not be considered Gothic at all; so that all we have to reason upon is merely, if I may be allowed so to express it, a greater or less degree of *Gothicness* in each building we examine. And it is this *Gothicness*, — the character which, according as it is found more or less in a building, makes it more or less Gothic, — of which I want to define the nature; and I feel the same kind of difficulty in doing so which would be encountered by any one who undertook to explain, for instance, the nature of Redness, without any actually red thing to point to, but only orange and purple things. Suppose he had only a piece of heather and a dead oak-leaf to do it with. He might say, the color which is mixed with the yellow in this oak-leaf, and with the blue in this heather, would be red, if you had it separate; but it would be difficult, nevertheless, to make the abstrac-

tion perfectly intelligible; and it is so in a far greater degree to make the abstraction of the Gothic character intelligible, because that character itself is made up of many mingled ideas, and can consist only in their union. That is to say, pointed arches do not constitute Gothic, nor vaulted roofs, nor flying buttresses, nor grotesque sculptures; but all or some of these things, and many other things with them, when they come together so as to have life.

§ III. Observe also, that, in the definition proposed, I shall only endeavor to analyze the idea which I suppose already to exist in the reader's mind. We all have some notion, most of us a very determined one, of the meaning of the term Gothic; but I know that many persons have this idea in their minds without being able to define it: that is to say, understanding generally that Westminster Abbey is Gothic, and St. Paul's is not, that Strasburg Cathedral is Gothic, and St. Peter's is not, they have, nevertheless, no clear notion of what it is that they recognize in the one or miss in the other, such as would enable them to say how far the work at Westminster or Strasburg is good and pure of its kind; still less to say of any nondescript building, like St. James's Palace or Windsor Castle, how much right Gothic element there is in it, and how much wanting. And I believe this inquiry to be a pleasant and profitable one; and that there will be found something more than usually interesting in tracing out this grey, shadowy, many-pinnacled image of the Gothic spirit within us; and discerning what fellowship there is between it and our Northern hearts. And if, at any point of the inquiry, I should interfere with any of the reader's previously formed conceptions, and use the term Gothic in any sense which he would not willingly attach to it, I do not ask him to accept, but only to examine and understand, my interpretation, as necessary to the intelligibility of what follows in the rest of the work.

§ IV. We have, then, the Gothic character submitted to our analysis, just as the rough mineral is submitted to that of the chemist, entangled with many other foreign substances, itself perhaps in no place pure, or ever to be obtained or seen in purity for more than an instant; but nevertheless a thing

of definite and separate nature, however inextricable or confused in appearance. Now observe: the chemist defines his mineral by two separate kinds of character; one external, its crystalline form, hardness, lustre, etc.; the other internal, the proportions and nature of its constituent atoms. Exactly in the same manner, we shall find that Gothic architecture has external forms, and internal elements. Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders, legibly expressed in it; as fancifulness, love of variety, love of richness, and such others. Its external forms are pointed arches, vaulted roofs, etc. And unless both the elements and the forms are there, we have no right to call the style Gothic. It is not enough that it has the Form, if it have not also the power and life. It is not enough that it has the Power, if it have not the form. We must therefore inquire into each of these characters successively; and determine first, what is the Mental Expression, and secondly, what the Material Form, of Gothic architecture, properly so called.

1st. *Mental Power or Expression.* What characters, we have to discover, did the Gothic builders love, or instinctively express in their work, as distinguished from all other builders?

§ v. Let us go back for a moment to our chemistry, and note that, in defining a mineral by its constituent parts, it is not one nor another of them, that can make up the mineral, but the union of all: for instance, it is neither in charcoal, nor in oxygen, nor in lime, that there is the making of chalk, but in the combination of all three in certain measures; they are all found in very different things from chalk, and there is nothing like chalk either in charcoal or in oxygen, but they are nevertheless necessary to its existence.

So in the various mental characters which make up the soul of Gothic. It is not one nor another that produces it; but their union in certain measures. Each one of them is found in many other architectures besides Gothic; but Gothic cannot exist where they are not found, or, at least, where their place is not in some way supplied. Only there is this great difference between the composition of the mineral, and of the architectural style, that if we withdraw one of its elements from the stone, its form is utterly changed, and its existence as such and such a mineral is destroyed; but if we withdraw one of its mental elements from the Gothic style, it is

only a little less Gothic than it was before, and the union of two or three of its elements is enough already to bestow a certain Gothicness of character, which gains in intensity as we add the others, and loses as we again withdraw them.

§ vi. I believe, then, that the characteristic or moral elements of Gothic are the following, placed in the order of their importance:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Savageness. | 4. Grotesqueness. |
| 2. Changefulness. | 5. Rigidity. |
| 3. Naturalism. | 6. Redundance. |

These characters are here expressed as belonging to the building; as belonging to the builder, they would be expressed thus: 1. Savageness, or Rudeness. 2. Love of Change. 3. Love of Nature. 4. Disturbed Imagination. 5. Obstinacy. 6. Generosity. And I repeat, that the withdrawal of any one, or any two, will not at once destroy the Gothic character of a building, but the removal of a majority of them will. I shall proceed to examine them in their order.

§ vii. I. SAVAGENESS. I am not sure when the word "Gothic" was first generically applied to the architecture of the North; but I presume that, whatever the date of its original usage, it was intended to imply reproach, and express the barbaric character of the nations among whom that architecture arose. It never implied that they were literally of Gothic lineage, far less that their architecture had been originally invented by the Goths themselves; but it did imply that they and their buildings together exhibited a degree of sternness and rudeness, which, in contradistinction to the character of Southern and Eastern nations, appeared like a perpetual reflection of the contrast between the Goth and the Roman in their first encounter. And when that fallen Roman, in the utmost impotence of his luxury, and insolence of his guilt, became the model for the imitation of civilized Europe, at the close of the so-called Dark ages, the word Gothic became a term of unmitigated contempt, not unmixed with aversion. From that contempt, by the exertion of the antiquaries and architects of this century, Gothic architecture has been sufficiently vindicated; and perhaps some among us, in our admiration of the magnificent science of its structure, and sacredness of its expression, might desire that the term of ancient reproach should be withdrawn, and some other, of more apparent honorableness, adopted in its place. There is no chance, as there is no need, of such a substi-

tution. As far as the epithet was used scornfully, it was used falsely; but there is no reproach in the word, rightly understood; on the contrary, there is a profound truth, which the instinct of mankind almost unconsciously recognizes. It is true, greatly and deeply true, that the architecture of the North is rude and wild; but it is not true, that, for this reason, we are to condemn it, or despise. Far otherwise: I believe it is in this very character that it deserves our profoundest reverence.

§ VIII. The charts of the world which have been drawn up by modern science have thrown into a narrow space the expression of a vast amount of knowledge, but I have never yet seen any one pictorial enough to enable the spectator to imagine the kind of contrast in physical character which exists between Northern and Southern countries. We know the differences in detail, but we have not that broad glance and grasp which would enable us to feel them in their fulness. We know that gentians grow on the Alps, and olives on the Apennines; but we do not enough conceive for ourselves that variegated mosaic of the world's surface which a bird sees in its migration, that difference between the district of the gentian and of the olive which the stork and the swallow see far off, as they lean upon the sirocco wind. Let us, for a moment, try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight, and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its ancient promontories sleeping in the sun: here and there an angry spot of thunder, a grey stain of storm, moving upon the burning field; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light, Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of a golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as we stoop nearer to them, with bossy beaten work of mountain chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among masses of laurel, and orange, and plummy palm, that abate with their grey-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand. Then let us pass farther towards the north, until we see the orient colors change gradually into a vast belt of rainy green, where the pastures of Switzerland, and poplar valleys of France, and dark forests of the Danube and Carpathians stretch from the mouths of the Loire to those

of the Volga, seen through clefts in grey swirls of rain-cloud and flaky veils of the mist of the brooks, spreading low along the pasture lands: and then, farther north still, to see the earth heave into mighty masses of leaden rock and heathy moor, bordering with a broad waste of gloomy purple that belt of field and wood, and splintering into irregular and grisly islands amidst the northern seas, beaten by storm, and chilled by ice-drift, and tormented by furious pulses of contending tide, until the roots of the last forests fail from among the hill ravines, and the hunger of the north wind bites their peaks into barrenness; and, at last, the wall of ice, durable like iron, sets, deathlike, its white teeth against us out of the polar twilight. And, having once traversed in thought this gradation of the zoned iris of the earth in all its material vastness, let us go down nearer to it, and watch the parallel change in the belt of animal life: the multitudes of swift and brilliant creatures that glance in the air and sea, or tread the sands of the southern zone; striped zebras and spotted leopards, glistening serpents, and birds arrayed in purple and scarlet. Let us contrast their delicacy and brilliancy of color, and swiftness of motion, with the frost-cramped strength, and shaggy covering, and dusky plumage of the northern tribes; contrast the Arabian horse with the Shetland, the tiger and leopard with the wolf and bear, the antelope with the elk, the bird of paradise with the osprey; and then, submissively acknowledging the great laws by which the earth and all that it bears are ruled throughout their being, let us not condemn, but rejoice in the expression by man of his own rest in the statutes of the lands that gave him birth. Let us watch him with reverence as he sets side by side the burning gems, and smooths with soft sculpture the jasper pillars, that are to reflect a ceaseless sunshine, and rise into a cloudless sky: but not with less reverence let us stand by him, when, with rough strength and hurried stroke, he smites an uncouth animation out of the rocks which he has torn from among the moss of the moorland, and heaves into the darkened air the pile of iron buttress and rugged wall, instinct with work of an imagination as wild and wayward as the northern sea; creations of ungainly shape and rigid limb, but full of wolfish life; fierce as the winds that beat, and changeful as the clouds that shade them.

There is, I repeat, no degradation, no reproach in this, but all dignity and honor-

ableness; and we should err grievously in refusing either to recognize as an essential character of the existing architecture of the North, or to admit as a desirable character in that which it yet may be, this wildness of thought, and roughness of work; this look of mountain brotherhood between the cathedral and the Alp; this magnificence of sturdy power, put forth only the more energetically because the fine finger-touch was chilled away by the frosty wind, and the eye dimmed by the moor-mist, or blinded by the hail; this outspokening of the strong spirit of men who may not gather redundant fruitage from the earth, nor bask in dreamy benignity of sunshine, but must break the rock for bread, and cleave the forest for fire, and show, even in what they did for their delight, some of the hard habits of the arm and heart that grew on them as they swung the axe or pressed the plough.

§ IX. If, however, the savageness of Gothic architecture, merely as an expression of its origin among Northern nations, may be considered, in some sort, a noble character, it possesses a higher nobility still, when considered as an index, not of climate, but of religious principle.

In the 13th and 14th paragraphs of Chapter XXI. of the first volume of this work, it was noticed that the systems of architectural ornament, properly so called, might be divided into three: 1. Servile ornament, in which the execution or power of the inferior workman is entirely subjected to the intellect of the higher; 2. Constitutional ornament, in which the executive inferior power is, to a certain point, emancipated and independent, having a will of its own, yet confessing its inferiority and rendering obedience to higher powers; and 3. Revolutionary ornament, in which no executive inferiority is admitted at all. I must here explain the nature of these divisions at somewhat greater length.

Of Servile ornament, the principal schools are the Greek, Ninevite, and Egyptian; but their servility is of different kinds. The Greek master-workman was far advanced in knowledge and power above the Assyrian or Egyptian. Neither he nor those for whom he worked could endure the appearance of imperfection in anything; and, therefore, what ornament he appointed to be done by those beneath him was composed of mere geometrical forms, — balls, ridges, and perfectly symmetrical foliage, — which could be executed with absolute precision by line and

rule, and were as perfect in their way, when completed, as his own figure sculpture. The Assyrian and Egyptian, on the contrary, less cognizant of accurate form in anything, were content to allow their figure sculpture to be executed by inferior workmen, but lowered the method of its treatment to a standard which every workman could reach, and then trained him by discipline so rigid, that there was no chance of his falling beneath the standard appointed. The Greek gave to the lower workman no subject which he could not perfectly execute. The Assyrian gave him subjects which he could only execute imperfectly, but fixed a legal standard for his imperfection. The workman was, in both systems, a slave.¹

§ X. But in the mediæval, or especially Christian, system of ornament, this slavery is done away with altogether; Christianity having recognized, in small things as well as great, the individual value of every soul. But it not only recognizes its value; it confesses its imperfection, in only bestowing dignity upon the acknowledgment of unworthiness. That admission of lost power and fallen nature, which the Greek or Ninevite felt to be intensely painful, and, as far as might be, altogether refused, the Christian makes daily and hourly, contemplating the fact of it without fear, as tending, in the end, to God's greater glory. Therefore, to every spirit which Christianity summons to her service, her exhortation is: Do what you can, and confess frankly what you are unable to do; neither let your effort be shortened for fear of failure, nor your confession silenced for fear of shame. And it is, perhaps, the principal admirableness of the Gothic schools of architecture, that they thus receive the results of the labor of inferior minds; and out of fragments full of imperfection, and betraying that imperfection in every touch, indulgently raise up a stately and unaccountable whole.

§ XI. But the modern English mind has this much in common with that of the Greek, that it intensely desires, in all things, the utmost completion or perfection compatible with their nature. This is a noble

¹ The third kind of ornament, the Renaissance, is that in which the inferior detail becomes principal, the executor of every minor portion being required to exhibit skill and possess knowledge as great as that which is possessed by the master of the design; and in the endeavor to endow him with this skill and knowledge, his own original power is overwhelmed, and the whole building becomes a wearisome exhibition of well-educated imbecility. We must fully inquire into the nature of this form of error, when we arrive at the examination of the Renaissance schools. (Ruskin's note.)

character in the abstract, but becomes ignoble when it causes us to forget the relative dignities of that nature itself, and to prefer the perfectness of the lower nature to the imperfection of the higher; not considering that as, judged by such a rule, all the brute animals would be preferable to man, because more perfect in their functions and kind, and yet are always held inferior to him, so also in the works of man, those which are more perfect in their kind are always inferior to those which are, in their nature, liable to more faults and shortcomings. For the finer the nature, the more flaws it will show through the clearness of it; and it is a law of this universe, that the best things shall be seldome seen in their best form. The wild grass grows well and strongly, one year with another; but the wheat is, according to the greater nobleness of its nature, liable to the bitterer blight. And therefore, while in all things that we see, or do, we are to desire perfection, and strive for it, we are nevertheless not to set the meaner thing, in its narrow accomplishment, above the nobler thing, in its mighty progress; not to esteem smooth minuteness above shattered majesty; not to prefer mean victory to honorable defeat; not to lower the level of our aim, that we may the more surely enjoy the complacency of success.¹ But, above all, in our dealings with the souls of other men, we are to take care how we check, by severe requirement or narrow caution, efforts which might otherwise lead to a noble issue; and, still more, how we withhold our admiration from great excellencies, because they are mingled with rough faults. Now, in the make and nature of every man, however rude or simple, whom we employ in manual labor, there are some powers for better things: some tardy imagination, torpid capacity of emotion, tottering steps of thought, there are, even at the worst; and in most cases it is all our own fault that they are tardy or torpid. But they cannot be strengthened, unless we are content to take them in their feebleness, and unless we prize and honor them in their imperfection above the best and most perfect manual skill. And this is what we have to do with all our laborers; to look for the *thoughtful* part of them, and get that out of them, whatever we lose for it, whatever faults and errors we are obliged to take with it. For the best that is in them cannot manifest itself, but in company with much error.

Understand this clearly: You can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to cut one; to strike a curved line, and to carve it; and to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind: but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool.

§ XII. And observe, you are put to stern choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cog-wheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you must unhumanize them. All the energy of their spirits must be given to make cogs and compasses of themselves. All their attention and strength must go to the accomplishment of the mean act. The eye of the soul must be bent upon the finger-point, and the soul's force must fill all the invisible nerves that guide it, ten hours a day, that it may not err from its steely precision, and so soul and sight be worn away, and the whole human being be lost at last — a heap of sawdust, so far as its intellectual work in this world is concerned; saved only by its Heart, which cannot go into the form of cogs and compasses, but expands, after the ten hours are over, into fireside humanity. On the other hand, if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing; and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dulness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause; but out comes the whole majesty of him also; and we know the height of it only, when we see the clouds settling upon him. And, whether the clouds be bright or dark, there will be transfiguration behind and within them.

§ XIII. And now, reader, look round this English room of yours, about which you have been proud so often, because the work of it was so good and strong, and the ornaments of it so finished. Examine again all those ac-

¹ A doctrine characteristic of nineteenth-century idealism, notably in Browning.

curate moldings, and perfect polishings, and unerring adjustments of the seasoned wood and tempered steel. Many a time you have exulted over them, and thought how great England was, because her slightest work was done so thoroughly. Alas! if read rightly, these perfectnesses are signs of a slavery in our England a thousand times more bitter and more degrading than that of the scourged African, or helot Greek. Men may be beaten, chained, tormented, yoked like cattle, slaughtered like summer flies, and yet remain in one sense, and the best sense, free. But to smother their souls within them, to blight and hew into rotting pollards the suckling branches of their human intelligence, to make the flesh and skin which, after the worm's work on it, is to see God, into leathern thongs to yoke machinery with, — this it is to be slave-masters indeed; and there might be more freedom in England, though her feudal lords' lightest words were worth men's lives, and though the blood of the vexed husbandman dropped in the furrows of her fields, than there is while the animation of her multitudes is sent like fuel to feed the factory smoke, and the strength of them is given daily to be wasted into the fineness of a web, or racked into the exactness of a line.

§ XIV. And, on the other hand, go forth again to gaze upon the old cathedral front, where you have smiled so often at the fantastic ignorance of the old sculptors: examine once more those ugly goblins, and formless monsters, and stern statues, anatomiless and rigid; but do not mock at them, for they are signs of the life and liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which it must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children.

§ XV. Let me not be thought to speak wildly or extravagantly. It is verily this degradation of the operative into a machine, which, more than any other evil of the times, is leading the mass of the nations everywhere into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves. Their universal outcry against wealth, and against nobility, is not forced from them either by the pressure of famine, or the sting of mortified pride. These do much, and have done much in all ages; but the foundations of society were never yet shaken as they are at this day. It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which

they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as the only means of pleasure. It is not that men are pained by the scorn of the upper classes, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel that the kind of labor to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one, and makes them less than men. Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them, as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them: for, of old the separation between the noble and the poor was merely a wall built by law; now it is a veritable difference in level of standing, a precipice between upper and lower grounds in the field of humanity, and there is pestilential air at the bottom of it. I know not if a day is ever to come when the nature of right freedom will be understood, and when men will see that to obey another man, to labor for him, yield reverence to him or to his place, is not slavery. It is often the best kind of liberty, — liberty from care. The man who says to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, has, in most cases, more sense of restraint and difficulty than the man who obeys him. The movements of the one are hindered by the burden on his shoulder; of the other, by the bridle on his lips: there is no way by which the burden may be lightened; but we need not suffer from the bridle if we do not chafe at it. To yield reverence to another, to hold ourselves and our lives at his disposal, is not slavery; often, it is the noblest state in which a man can live in this world. There is, indeed, a reverence which is servile, that is to say irrational or selfish: but there is also noble reverence, that is to say, reasonable and loving; and a man is never so noble as when he is reverent in this kind; nay, even if the feeling pass the bounds of mere reason, so that it be loving, a man is raised by it. Which had, in reality, most of the serf nature in him, — the Irish peasant who was lying in wait yesterday for his landlord, with his musket muzzle thrust through the ragged hedge; or that old mountain servant, who, 200 years ago, at Inverkeithing, gave up his own life, and the lives of his seven sons for his chief? — as each fell, calling forth his brother to the death, "Another for Hector!" And therefore, in all ages and all countries, reverence has been paid and sacrifice made by men to each other, not only without complaint, but rejoicingly; and famine, and peril, and sword, and all evil, and all shame, have

1 Vide Preface to *Fair Maid of Perth*. (Ruskin's note.)

been borne willingly in the causes of masters and kings; for all these gifts of the heart ennobled the men who gave, not less than the men who received them, and nature prompted, and God rewarded the sacrifice. But to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognized abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels, and weighed with its hammer strokes; — this nature bade not, — this God blesses not, — this humanity for no long time is able to endure.

§ XVI. We have much studied and much perfected, of late, the great civilized invention of the division of labor; only we give it a false name. It is not, truly speaking, the labor that is divided; but the men: Divided into mere segments of men — broken into small fragments and crumbs of life; so that all the little piece of intelligence that is left in a man is not enough to make a pin, or a nail, but exhausts itself in making the point of a pin, or the head of a nail. Now it is a good and desirable thing, truly, to make many pins in a day; but if we could only see with what crystal sand their points were polished, — sand of human soul, much to be magnified before it can be discerned for what it is, — we should think there might be some loss in it also. And the great cry that rises from all our manufacturing cities, louder than their furnace blast, is all in very deed for this, — that we manufacture everything there except men; we blanch cotton, and strengthen steel, and refine sugar, and shape pottery; but to brighten, to strengthen, to refine, or to form a single living spirit, never enters into our estimate of advantages. And all the evil to which that cry is urging our myriads can be met only in one way: not by teaching nor preaching, for to teach them is but to show them their misery, and to preach to them, if we do nothing more than preach, is to mock at it. It can be met only by a right understanding, on the part of all classes, of what kinds of labor are good for men, raising them, and making them happy; by a determined sacrifice of such convenience, or beauty, or cheapness as is to be got only by the degradation of the workman; and by equally determined demand for the products and results of healthy and ennobling labor.

§ XVII. And how, it will be asked, are these products to be recognized, and this demand to be regulated? Easily: by the observance of three broad and simple rules:

I. Never encourage the manufacture of

any article not absolutely necessary, in the production of which *Invention* has no share.

2. Never demand an exact finish for its own sake, but only for some practical or noble end.

3. Never encourage imitation or copying of any kind, except for the sake of preserving record of great works.

The second of these principles is the only one which directly rises out of the consideration of our immediate subject; but I shall briefly explain the meaning and extent of the first also, reserving the enforcement of the third for another place.

I. Never encourage the manufacture of anything not necessary, in the production of which invention has no share.

For instance. Glass beads are utterly unnecessary, and there is no design or thought employed in their manufacture. They are formed by first drawing out the glass into rods; these rods are chopped up into fragments of the size of beads by the human hand, and the fragments are then rounded in the furnace. The men who chop up the rods sit at their work all day, their hands vibrating with a perpetual and exquisitely timed palsy, and the beads dropping beneath their vibration like hail. Neither they, nor the men who draw out the rods or fuse the fragments, have the smallest occasion for the use of any single human faculty; and every young lady, therefore, who buys glass beads is engaged in the slave-trade, and in a much more cruel one than that which we have so long been endeavoring to put down.

But glass cups and vessels may become the subjects of exquisite invention; and if in buying these we pay for the invention, that is to say for the beautiful form, or color, or engraving, and not for mere finish of execution, we are doing good to humanity.

§ XVIII. So, again, the cutting of precious stones, in all ordinary cases, requires little exertion of any mental faculty; some tact and judgment in avoiding flaws, and so on, but nothing to bring out the whole mind. Every person who wears cut jewels merely for the sake of their value is, therefore, a slave-driver.

But the working of the goldsmith, and the various designing of grouped jewellery and enamel-work, may become the subject of the most noble human intelligence. Therefore, money spent in the purchase of well-designed plate, of precious engraved vases, cameos, or enamels, does good to humanity; and, in

work of this kind, jewels may be employed to heighten its splendor; and their cutting is then a price paid for the attainment of a noble end, and thus perfectly allowable.

§ XIX. I shall perhaps press this law farther elsewhere, but our immediate concern is chiefly with the second, namely, never to demand an exact finish, when it does not lead to a noble end. For observe, I have only dwelt upon the rudeness of Gothic, or any other kind of imperfectness, as admirable, where it was impossible to get design or thought without it. If you are to have the thought of a rough and untaught man, you must have it in a rough and untaught way; but from an educated man, who can without effort express his thoughts in an educated way, take the graceful expression, and be thankful. Only *get* the thought, and do not silence the peasant because he cannot speak good grammar, or until you have taught him his grammar. Grammar and refinement are good things, both, only be sure of the better thing first. And thus in art, delicate finish is desirable from the greatest masters, and is always given by them. In some places Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Phidias, Perugino, Turner, all finished with the most exquisite care; and the finish they give always leads to the fuller accomplishment of their noble purposes. But lower men than these cannot finish, for it requires consummate knowledge to finish consummately, and then we must take their thoughts as they are able to give them. So the rule is simple: Always look for invention first, and after that, for such execution as will help the invention, and as the inventor is capable of without painful effort, and *no more*. Above all, demand no refinement of execution where there is no thought, for that is slaves' work, unredeemed. Rather choose rough work than smooth work, so only that the practical purpose be answered, and never imagine there is reason to be proud of anything that may be accomplished by patience and sand-paper.

§ XX. I shall only give one example, which however will show the reader what I mean, from the manufacture already alluded to, that of glass. Our modern glass is exquisitely clear in its substance, true in its form, accurate in its cutting. We are proud of this. We ought to be ashamed of it. The old Venice glass was muddy, inaccurate in all its forms, and clumsily cut, if at all. And the old Venetian was justly proud of it. For there is this difference between the English and Venetian workman, that the former

thinks only of accurately matching his patterns, and getting his curves perfectly true and his edges perfectly sharp, and becomes a mere machine for rounding curves and sharpening edges, while the old Venetian cared not a whit whether his edges were sharp or not, but he invented a new design for every glass that he made, and never molded a handle or a lip without a new fancy in it. And therefore, though some Venetian glass is ugly and clumsy enough, when made by clumsy and uninventive workmen, other Venetian glass is so lovely in its forms that no price is too great for it; and we never see the same form in it twice. Now you cannot have the finish and the varied form too. If the workman is thinking about his edges, he cannot be thinking of his design; if of his design, he cannot think of his edges. Choose whether you will pay for the lovely form or the perfect finish, and choose at the same moment whether you will make the worker a man or a grindstone.

§ XXI. Nay, but the reader interrupts me, — "If the workman can design beautifully, I would not have him kept at the furnace. Let him be taken away and made a gentleman, and have a studio, and design his glass there, and I will have it blown and cut for him by common workmen, and so I will have my design and my finish too."

All ideas of this kind are founded upon two mistaken suppositions: the first, that one man's thoughts can be, or ought to be, executed by another man's hands; the second, that manual labor is a degradation, when it is governed by intellect.

On a large scale, and in work determinable by line and rule, it is indeed both possible and necessary that the thoughts of one man should be carried out by the labor of others; in this sense I have already defined the best architecture to be the expression of the mind of manhood by the hands of childhood. But on a smaller scale, and in a design which cannot be mathematically defined, one man's thoughts can never be expressed by another: and the difference between the spirit of touch of the man who is inventing, and of the man who is obeying directions, is often all the difference between a great and a common work of art. How wide the separation is between original and second-hand execution, I shall endeavor to show elsewhere; it is not so much to our purpose here as to mark the other and more fatal error of despising manual labor when governed by intellect; for it is no less fatal an error to despise it when

thus regulated by intellect, than to value it for its own sake. We are always in these days endeavoring to separate the two; we want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman, and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers, and miserable workers. Now it is only by labor that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labor can be made happy, and the two cannot be separated with impunity. It would be well if all of us were good handicraftsmen in some kind, and the dishonor of manual labor done away with altogether; so that though there should still be a trenchant distinction of race between nobles and commoners, there should not, among the latter, be a trenchant distinction of employment, as between idle and working men, or between men of liberal and illiberal professions. All professions should be liberal, and there should be less pride felt in peculiarity of employment, and more in excellence of achievement. And yet more, in each several profession, no master should be too proud to do its hardest work. The painter should grind his own colors; the architect work in the mason's yard with his men; the master-manufacturer be himself a more skilful operative than any man in his mills; and the distinction between one man and another be only in experience and skill, and the authority and wealth which these must naturally and justly obtain.

§ XXII. I should be led far from the matter in hand, if I were to pursue this interesting subject. Enough, I trust, has been said to show the reader that the rudeness or imperfection which at first rendered the term "Gothic" one of reproach is indeed, when rightly understood, one of the most noble characters of Christian architecture, and not only a noble but an *essential* one. It seems a fantastic paradox, but it is nevertheless a most important truth, that no architecture can be truly noble which is *not* imperfect. And this is easily demonstrable. For since the architect, whom we will suppose capable of doing all in perfection, cannot execute the whole with his own hands, he must either make slaves of his workmen in the old Greek, and present English fashion, and level his work to a slave's capacities, which is to de-

grade it; or else he must take his workmen as he finds them, and let them show their weaknesses together with their strength, which will involve the Gothic imperfection, but render the whole work as noble as the intellect of the age can make it.

§ XXIII. But the principle may be stated more broadly still. I have confined the illustration of it to architecture, but I must not leave it as if true of architecture only. Hitherto I have used the words imperfect and perfect merely to distinguish between work grossly unskilful, and work executed with average precision and science; and I have been pleading that any degree of unskilfulness should be admitted, so only that the laborer's mind had room for expression. But, accurately speaking, no good work whatever can be perfect, and *the demand for perfection is always a sign of a misunderstanding of the ends of art.*

§ XXIV. This for two reasons, both based on everlasting laws. The first, that no great man ever stops working till he has reached his point of failure; that is to say, his mind is always far in advance of his powers of execution, and the latter will now and then give way in trying to follow it; besides that, he will always give to the inferior portions of his work only such inferior attention as they require; and according to his greatness he becomes so accustomed to the feeling of dissatisfaction with the best he can do, that in moments of lassitude or anger with himself he will not care though the beholder be dissatisfied also. I believe there has only been one man who would not acknowledge this necessity, and strove always to reach perfection, Leonardo; the end of his vain effort being merely that he would take ten years to a picture, and leave it unfinished. And therefore, if we are to have great men working at all, or less men doing their best, the work will be imperfect, however beautiful. Of human work none but what is bad can be perfect, in its own bad way.¹

§ XXV. The second reason is, that imperfection is in some sort essential to all that we know of life. It is the sign of life in a mortal body, that is to say, of a state of progress and change. Nothing that lives is, or can be, rigidly perfect; part of it is decaying, part nascent. The foxglove blossom, — a third

¹ The Elgin marbles are supposed by many persons to be "perfect." In the most important portions they indeed approach perfection, but only there. The draperies are unfinished, the hair and wool of the animals are unfinished, and the entire bas-reliefs of the frieze are roughly cut. (Ruskin's note.)

part bud, a third part past, a third part in full bloom, — is a type of the life of this world. And in all things that live there are certain irregularities and deficiencies which are not only signs of life, but sources of beauty. No human face is exactly the same in its lines on each side, no leaf perfect in its lobes, no branch in its symmetry. All admit irregularity as they imply change; and to banish imperfection is to destroy expression, to check exertion, to paralyze vitality. All things are literally better, lovelier, and more beloved for the imperfections which have been divinely appointed, that the law of human life may be Effort, and the law of human judgment, Mercy.

Accept this then for a universal law, that neither architecture nor any other noble work of man can be good unless it be imperfect; and let us be prepared for the otherwise strange fact, which we shall discern clearly as we approach the period of the Renaissance, that the first cause of the fall of the arts of Europe was a relentless requirement of perfection, incapable alike either of being silenced by veneration for greatness, or softened into forgiveness of simplicity.

Thus far then of the Rudeness or Savageness, which is the first mental element of Gothic architecture. It is an element in many other healthy architectures also, as in Byzantine and Romanesque; but true Gothic cannot exist without it.

§ XXVI. The second mental element above named was CHANGEFULNESS, or Variety.

I have already enforced the allowing independent operation to the inferior workman, simply as a duty to him, and as ennobling the architecture by rendering it more Christian. We have now to consider what reward we obtain for the performance of this duty, namely, the perpetual variety of every feature of the building.

Wherever the workman is utterly enslaved, the parts of the building must of course be absolutely like each other; for the perfection of his execution can only be reached by exercising him in doing one thing, and giving him nothing else to do. The degree in which the workman is degraded may be thus known at a glance, by observing whether the several parts of the building are similar or not; and if, as in Greek work, all the capitals are alike, and all the moldings unvaried, then the degradation is complete; if, as in Egyptian or Ninevite work, though the manner of executing certain figures is always the same, the order of design is perpetually varied, the de-

gradation is less total; if, as in Gothic work, there is perpetual change both in design and execution, the workman must have been altogether set free.

§ XXVII. How much the beholder gains from the liberty of the laborer may perhaps be questioned in England, where one of the strongest instincts in nearly every mind is that Love of Order which makes us desire that our house windows should pair like our carriage horses, and allows us to yield our faith unhesitatingly to architectural theories which fix a form for everything, and forbid variation from it. I would not impeach love of order: it is one of the most useful elements of the English mind; it helps us in our commerce and in all purely practical matters; and it is in many cases one of the foundation stones of morality. Only do not let us suppose that love of order is love of art. It is true that order, in its highest sense, is one of the necessities of art, just as time is a necessity of music; but love of order has no more to do with our right enjoyment of architecture or painting, than love of punctuality with the appreciation of an opera. Experience, I fear, teaches us that accurate and methodical habits in daily life are seldom characteristic of those who either quickly perceive, or richly possess, the creative powers of art; there is, however, nothing inconsistent between the two instincts, and nothing to hinder us from retaining our business habits, and yet fully allowing and enjoying the noblest gifts of Invention. We already do so, in every other branch of art except architecture, and we only do *not* so there because we have been taught that it would be wrong. Our architects gravely inform us that, as there are four rules of arithmetic, there are five orders of architecture; we, in our simplicity, think that this sounds consistent, and believe them. They inform us also that there is one proper form for Corinthian capitals, another for Doric, and another for Ionic. We, considering that there is also a proper form for the letters A, B, and C, think that this also sounds consistent, and accept the proposition. Understanding, therefore, that one form of the said capitals is proper, and no other, and having a conscientious horror of all impropriety, we allow the architect to provide us with the said capitals, of the proper form, in such and such a quantity, and in all other points to take care that the legal forms are observed; which having done, we rest in forced confidence that we are well housed.

§ XXVIII. But our higher instincts are not deceived. We take no pleasure in the building provided for us, resembling that which we take in a new book or a new picture. We may be proud of its size, complacent in its correctness, and happy in its convenience. We may take the same pleasure in its symmetry and workmanship as in a well-ordered room, or a skilful piece of manufacture. And this we suppose to be all the pleasure that architecture was ever intended to give us. The idea of reading a building as we would read Milton or Dante, and getting the same kind of delight out of the stones as out of the stanzas, never enters our minds for a moment. And for good reason;—There is indeed rhythm in the verses, quite as strict as the symmetries or rhythm of the architecture, and a thousand times more beautiful, but there is something else than rhythm. The verses were neither made to order, nor to match, as the capitals were; and we have therefore a kind of pleasure in them other than a sense of propriety. But it requires a strong effort of common sense to shake ourselves quit of all that we have been taught for the last two centuries, and wake to the perception of a truth just as simple and certain as it is new: that great art, whether expressing itself in words, colors, or stones, does *not* say the same thing over and over again; that the merit of architectural, as of every other art, consists in its saying new and different things; that to repeat itself is no more a characteristic of genius in marble than it is of genius in print; and that we may, without offending any laws of good taste, require of an architect, as we do of a novelist, that he should be not only correct, but entertaining.

Yet all this is true, and self-evident; only hidden from us, as many other self-evident things are, by false teaching. Nothing is a great work of art, for the production of which either rules or models can be given. Exactly so far as architecture works on known rules, and from given models, it is not an art, but a manufacture; and it is, of the two procedures, rather less rational (because more easy) to copy capitals or moldings from Phidias, and call ourselves architects, than to copy heads and hands from Titian, and call ourselves painters.

§ XXIX. Let us then understand at once, that change or variety is as much a necessity to the human heart and brain in buildings as in books; that there is no merit, though there is some occasional use, in monotony; and

that we must no more expect to derive either pleasure or profit from an architecture whose ornaments are of one pattern, and whose pillars are of one proportion, than we should out of a universe in which the clouds were all of one shape, and the trees all of one size.

§ xxx. And this we confess in deeds, though not in words. All the pleasure which the people of the nineteenth century take in art, is in pictures, sculpture, minor objects of virtù, or mediæval architecture, which we enjoy under the term picturesque: no pleasure is taken anywhere in modern buildings, and we find all men of true feeling delighting to escape out of modern cities into natural scenery: hence, as I shall hereafter show, that peculiar love of landscape which is characteristic of the age. It would be well, if, in all other matters, we were as ready to put up with what we dislike, for the sake of compliance with established law, as we are in architecture.

§ xxxi. How so debased a law ever came to be established, we shall see when we come to describe the Renaissance schools: here we have only to note, as the second most essential element of the Gothic spirit, that it broke through that law wherever it found it in existence; it not only dared, but delighted in, the infringement of every servile principle; and invented a series of forms of which the merit was, not merely that they were new, but that they were *capable of perpetual novelty*. The pointed arch was not merely a bold variation from the round, but it admitted of millions of variations in itself; for the proportions of a pointed arch are changeable to infinity, while a circular arch is always the same. The grouped shaft was not merely a bold variation from the single one, but it admitted of millions of variations in its grouping, and in the proportions resultant from its grouping. The introduction of tracery was not only a startling change in the treatment of window lights, but admitted endless changes in the interlacement of the tracery bars themselves. So that, while in all living Christian architecture the love of variety exists, the Gothic schools exhibited that love in culminating energy; and their influence, wherever it extended itself, may be sooner and farther traced by this character than by any other; the tendency to the adoption of Gothic types being always first shown by greater irregularity and richer variation in the forms of the architecture it is about to supersede, long before the appearance of the pointed arch or of any other

recognizable *outward* sign of the Gothic mind.

§ xxxii. We must, however, herein note carefully what distinction there is between a healthy and a diseased love of change; for as it was in healthy love of change that the Gothic architecture rose, it was partly in consequence of diseased love of change that it was destroyed. In order to understand this clearly, it will be necessary to consider the different ways in which change and monotony are presented to us in nature; both having their use, like darkness and light, and the one incapable of being enjoyed without the other: change being most delightful after some prolongation of monotony, as light appears most brilliant after the eyes have been for some time closed.

§ xxxiii. I believe that the true relations of monotony and change may be most simply understood by observing them in music. We may therein notice, first, that there is a sublimity and majesty in monotony which there is not in rapid or frequent variation. This is true throughout all nature. The greater part of the sublimity of the sea depends on its monotony; so also that of desolate moor and mountain scenery; and especially the sublimity of motion, as in the quiet, unchanged fall and rise of an engine beam. So also there is sublimity in darkness which there is not in light.

§ xxxiv. Again, monotony after a certain time, or beyond a certain degree, becomes either uninteresting or intolerable, and the musician is obliged to break it in one or two ways: either while the air or passage is perpetually repeated, its notes are variously enriched and harmonized; or else, after a certain number of repeated passages, an entirely new passage is introduced, which is more or less delightful according to the length of the previous monotony. Nature, of course, uses both these kinds of variation perpetually. The sea-waves, resembling each other in general mass, but none like its brother in minor divisions and curves, are a monotony of the first kind; the great plain, broken by an emergent rock or clump of trees, is a monotony of the second.

§ xxxv. Farther: in order to the enjoyment of the change in either case, a certain degree of patience is required from the hearer or observer. In the first case, he must be satisfied to endure with patience the recurrence of the great masses of sound or form, and to seek for entertainment in a careful watchfulness of the minor details. In the

second case, he must bear patiently the infliction of the monotony for some moments, in order to feel the full refreshment of the change. This is true even of the shortest musical passage in which the element of monotony is employed. In cases of more majestic monotony, the patience required is so considerable that it becomes a kind of pain, — a price paid for the future pleasure.

§ xxxvi. Again: the talent of the composer is not in the monotony, but in the changes; he may show feeling and taste by his use of monotony in certain places or degrees: that is to say, by his *various* employment of it; but it is always in the new arrangement or invention that his intellect is shown, and not in the monotony which relieves it.

Lastly: if the pleasure of change be too often repeated, it ceases to be delightful, for then change itself becomes monotonous, and we are driven to seek delight in extreme and fantastic degrees of it. This is the diseased love of change of which we have above spoken.

§ xxxvii. From these facts we may gather generally that monotony is, and ought to be, in itself painful to us, just as darkness is; that an architecture which is altogether monotonous is a dark or dead architecture; and, of those who love it, it may be truly said, "they love darkness rather than light." But monotony in certain measure, used in order to give value to change, and, above all, that *transparent* monotony which, like the shadows of a great painter, suffers all manner of dimly suggested form to be seen through the body of it, is an essential in architectural as in all other composition; and the endurance of monotony has about the same place in a healthy mind that the endurance of darkness has: that is to say, as a strong intellect will have pleasure in the solemnities of storm and twilight, and in the broken and mysterious lights that gleam among them, rather than in mere brilliancy and glare, while a frivolous mind will dread the shadow and the storm; and as a great man will be ready to endure much darkness of fortune in order to reach greater eminence of power or felicity, while an inferior man will not pay the price; exactly in like manner a great mind will accept, or even delight in, monotony which would be wearisome to an inferior intellect, because it has more patience and power of expectation, and is ready to pay the full price for the great future

pleasure of change. But in all cases it is not that the noble nature loves monotony, any more than it loves darkness or pain. But it can bear with it, and receives a high pleasure in the endurance or patience, a pleasure necessary to the well-being of this world; while those who will not submit to the temporary sameness, but rush from one change to another, gradually dull the edge of change itself, and bring a shadow and weariness over the whole world from which there is no more escape.

§ XXXVIII. From these general uses of variety in the economy of the world, we may at once understand its use and abuse in architecture. The variety of the Gothic schools is the more healthy and beautiful, because in many cases it is entirely unstudied, and results, not from the mere love of change, but from practical necessities. For in one point of view Gothic is not only the best, but the *only rational* architecture, as being that which can fit itself most easily to all services, vulgar or noble. Undefined in its slope of roof, height of shaft, breadth of arch, or disposition of ground plan, it can shrink into a turret, expand into a hall, coil into a staircase, or spring into a spire, with undegraded grace and unexhausted energy; and whenever it finds occasion for change in its form or purpose, it submits to it without the slightest sense of loss either to its unity or majesty, — subtle and flexible like a fiery serpent, but ever attentive to the voice of the charmer. And it is one of the chief virtues of the Gothic builders, that they never suffered ideas of outside symmetries and consistencies to interfere with the real use and value of what they did. If they wanted a window, they opened one; a room, they added one; a buttress, they built one; utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance, knowing (as indeed it always happened) that such daring interruptions of the formal plan would rather give additional interest to its symmetry than injure it. So that, in the best times of Gothic, a useless window would rather have been opened in an unexpected place for the sake of the surprise, than a useful one forbidden for the sake of symmetry. Every successive architect, employed upon a great work, built the pieces he added in his own way, utterly regardless of the style adopted by his predecessors; and if two towers were raised in nominal correspondence at the sides of a cathedral front, one was nearly sure to be different from the other,

and in each the style at the top to be different from the style at the bottom.¹

§ XXXIX. These marked variations were, however, only permitted as part of the great system of perpetual change which ran through every member of Gothic design, and rendered it as endless a field for the beholder's inquiry, as for the builder's imagination: change, which in the best schools is subtle and delicate, and rendered more delightful by intermingling of a noble monotony; in the more barbaric schools is somewhat fantastic and redundant; but, in all, a necessary and constant condition of the life of the school. Sometimes the variety is in one feature, sometimes in another; it may be in the capitals or crockets, in the niches or the traceries, or in all together, but in some one or other of the features it will be found always. If the moldings are constant, the surface sculpture will change; if the capitals are of a fixed design, the traceries will change; if the traceries are monotonous, the capitals will change; and if even, as in some fine schools, the early English for example, there is the slightest approximation to an unvarying type of moldings, capitals, and floral decoration, the variety is found in the disposition of the masses, and in the figure sculpture.

§ XL. I must now refer for a moment, before we quit the consideration of this, the second mental element of Gothic, to the opening of the third chapter of the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in which the distinction was drawn (§ 2) between man gathering and man governing; between his acceptance of the sources of delight from nature, and his development of authoritative or imaginative power in their arrangement: for the two mental elements, not only of Gothic, but of all good architecture, which we have just been examining, belong to it, and are admirable in it, chiefly as it is, more than any other subject of art, the work of man, and the expression of the average power of man. A picture or poem is often little more than a feeble utterance of man's admiration of something out of himself; but architecture approaches more to a creation of his own, born of his necessities, and expressive of his nature. It is also, in some sort, the work of the whole race, while the picture or statue are the work of one only, in most cases more highly gifted than his fellows. And therefore we may expect that

¹ In the eighth chapter we shall see a remarkable instance of this sacrifice of symmetry to convenience in the arrangement of the windows of the Ducal Palace. (Ruskin's note.)

the first two elements of good architecture should be expressive of some great truths commonly belonging to the whole race, and necessary to be understood or felt by them in all their work that they do under the sun. And observe what they are: the confession of Imperfection, and the confession of Desire of Change. The building of the bird and the bee needs not express anything like this. It is perfect and unchanging. But just because we are something better than birds or bees, our building must confess that we have not reached the perfection we can imagine, and cannot rest in the condition we have attained. If we pretend to have reached either perfection or satisfaction, we have degraded ourselves and our work. God's work only may express that; but ours may never have that sentence written upon it, — "And behold, it was very good." And observe again, it is not merely as it renders the edifice a book of various knowledge, or a mine of precious thought, that variety is essential to its nobleness. The vital principle is not the love of *Knowledge*, but the love of *Change*. It is that strange *disquietude* of the Gothic spirit that is its greatness; that restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof, and yet is not satisfied, nor shall be satisfied. The Greek could stay in his triglyph furrow, and be at peace; but the work of the Gothic heart is fretwork still, and it can neither rest in, nor from, its labor, but must pass on, sleeplessly, until its love of change shall be pacified for ever in the change that must come alike on them that wake and them that sleep.

§ XLI. The third constituent element of the Gothic mind was stated to be NATURALISM; that is to say, the love of natural objects for their own sake, and the effort to represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistical laws.

This characteristic of the style partly follows in necessary connection with those named above. For, so soon as the workman is left free to represent what subjects he chooses, he must look to the nature that is round him for material, and will endeavor to represent it as he sees it, with more or less accuracy according to the skill he possesses, and with much play of fancy, but with small respect for law. There is, however, a marked distinction between the imaginations of the Western and Eastern races, even when both

are left free; the Western, or Gothic, delighting most in the representation of facts, and the Eastern (Arabian, Persian, and Chinese) in the harmony of colors and forms. Each of these intellectual dispositions has its particular forms of error and abuse, which, though I have often before stated, I must here again briefly explain; and this the rather, because the word Naturalism is, in one of its senses, justly used as a term of reproach, and the questions respecting the real relations of art and nature are so many and so confused throughout all the schools of Europe at this day, that I cannot clearly enunciate any single truth without appearing to admit, in fellowship with it, some kind of error, unless the reader will bear with me in entering into such an analysis of the subject as will serve us for general guidance.

§ XLII. We are to remember, in the first place, that the arrangement of colors and lines is an art analogous to the composition of music, and entirely independent of the representation of facts. Good coloring does not necessarily convey the image of anything but itself. It consists in certain proportions and arrangements of rays of light, but not in likenesses to anything. A few touches of certain greys and purples laid by a master's hand on white paper, will be good coloring; as more touches are added beside them, we may find out that they were intended to represent a dove's neck, and we may praise, as the drawing advances, the perfect imitation of the dove's neck. But the good coloring does not consist in that imitation, but in the abstract qualities and relations of the grey and purple.

In like manner, as soon as a great sculptor begins to shape his work out of the block, we shall see that its lines are nobly arranged, and of noble character. We may not have the slightest idea for what the forms are intended, whether they are of man or beast, of vegetation or drapery. Their likeness to anything does not affect their nobleness. They are magnificent forms, and that is all we need

I am always afraid to use this word "Composition;" it is so utterly misused in the general parlance respecting art. Nothing is more common than to hear divisions of art into "form, composition, and color," or "light and shade and composition," or "sentiment and composition," or it matters not what else and composition; the speakers in each case attaching a perfectly different meaning to the word, generally an indistinct one, and always a wrong one. Composition is, in plain English, "putting together," and it means the putting together of lines, of forms, of colors, of shades, or of ideas. Painters compose in color, compose in thought, compose in form, and compose in effect; the word being of use merely in order to express a scientific, disciplined, and inventive arrangement of any of these, instead of a merely natural or accidental one. (Ruskin's note.)

care to know of them, in order to say whether the workman is a good or bad sculptor.

§ XLIII. Now the noblest art is an exact unison of the abstract value, with the imitative power, of forms and colors. It is the noblest composition, used to express the noblest facts. But the human mind cannot in general unite the two perfections: it either pursues the fact to the neglect of the composition, or pursues the composition to the neglect of the fact.

§ XLIV. And it is intended by the Deity that it *should* do this; the best art is not always wanted. Facts are often wanted without art, as in a geological diagram; and art often without facts, as in a Turkey carpet. And most men have been made capable of giving either one or the other, but not both; only one or two, the very highest, can give both.

Observe then. Men are universally divided, as respects their artistical qualifications, into three great classes; a right, a left, and a centre. On the right side are the men of facts, on the left the men of design,¹ in the centre the men of both.

The three classes of course pass into each other by imperceptible gradations. The men of facts are hardly ever altogether without powers of design; the men of design are always in some measure cognizant of facts; and as each class possesses more or less of the powers of the opposite one, it approaches to the character of the central class. Few men, even in that central rank, are so exactly throned on the summit of the crest that they cannot be perceived to incline in the least one way or the other, embracing both horizons with their glance. Now each of these classes has, as I above said, a healthy function in the world, and correlative diseases or unhealthy functions; and, when the work of either of them is seen in its morbid condition, we are apt to find fault with the class of workmen, instead of finding fault only with the particular abuse which has perverted their action.

§ XLV. Let us first take an instance of the healthy action of the three classes on a simple subject, so as fully to understand the distinction between them, and then we shall more easily examine the corruptions to which they are liable. Fig. 1 in Plate VI. is a spray

of vine with a bough of cherry-tree, which I have outlined from nature as accurately as I could, without in the least endeavoring to compose or arrange the form. It is a simple piece of fact-work, healthy and good as such, and useful to any one who wanted to know plain truths about tendrils of vines, but there is no attempt at design in it. Plate XIX., below, represents a branch of vine used to decorate the angle of the Ducal Palace. It is faithful as a representation of vine, and yet so designed that every leaf serves an architectural purpose, and could not be spared from its place without harm. This is central work; fact and design together. Fig. 2 in Plate VI. is a spandril from St. Mark's, in which the forms of the vine are dimly suggested, the object of the design being merely to obtain graceful lines and well proportioned masses upon the gold ground. There is not the least attempt to inform the spectator of any facts about the growth of the vine; there are no stalks or tendrils, — merely running bands with leaves emergent from them, of which nothing but the outline is taken from the vine, and even that imperfectly. This is design, unregardful of facts.

Now the work is, in all these three cases, perfectly healthy. Fig. 1 is not bad work because it has not design, nor fig. 2 bad work because it has not facts. The object of the one is to give pleasure through truth, and of the other to give pleasure through composition. And both are right.

What, then, are the diseased operations to which the three classes of workmen are liable?

§ XLVI. Primarily, two; affecting the two inferior classes:

1st, When either of those two classes Despises the other;

2nd, When either of the two classes Envy the other; producing, therefore, four forms of dangerous error.

First, when the men of facts despise design. This is the error of the common Dutch painters, of merely imitative painters of still life, flowers, etc., and other men who, having either the gift of accurate imitation or strong sympathies with nature, suppose that all is done when the imitation is perfected or sympathy expressed. A large body of English landscapists come into this class, including most clever sketchers from nature, who fancy that to get a sky of true tone, and a gleam of sunshine or sweep of shower faithfully expressed, is all that can be required of

¹ Design is used in this place as expressive of the power to arrange lines and colors nobly. By facts, I mean facts perceived by the eye and mind, not facts accumulated by knowledge. See the chapter on Roman Renaissance (vol. III, chap. II) for this distinction. (Ruskin's note.)

art. These men are generally themselves answerable for much of their deadness of feeling to the higher qualities of composition. They probably have not originally the high gifts of design, but they lose such powers as they originally possessed by despising, and refusing to study, the results of great power of design in others. Their knowledge, as far as it goes, being accurate, they are usually presumptuous and self-conceited, and gradually become incapable of admiring anything but what is like their own works. They see nothing in the works of great designers but the faults, and do harm almost incalculable in the European society of the present day by sneering at the compositions of the greatest men of the earlier ages,¹ because they do not absolutely tally with their own ideas of "Nature."

§ XLVII. The second form of error is when the men of design despise facts. All noble design must deal with facts to a certain extent, for there is no food for it but in nature. The best colorist invents best by taking hints from natural colors; from birds, skies, or groups of figures. And if, in the delight of inventing fantastic color and form, the truths of nature are wilfully neglected, the intellect becomes comparatively decrepit, and that state of art results which we find among the Chinese. The Greek designers delighted in the facts of the human form, and became great in consequence; but the facts of lower nature were disregarded by them, and their inferior ornament became, therefore, dead and valueless.

§ XLVIII. The third form of error is when the men of facts envy design: that is to say, when, having only imitative powers, they refuse to employ those powers upon the visible world around them; but, having been taught that composition is the end of art, strive to obtain the inventive powers which nature has denied them, study nothing but the works of reputed designers, and perish in a fungous growth of plagiarism and laws of art.

Here was the great error of the beginning of this century; it is the error of the meanest kind of men that employ themselves in painting, and it is the most fatal of all, rendering those who fall into it utterly useless, incapable of helping the world with either truth or fancy, while, in all probability, they deceive it by base resemblances of both, until

¹ "Earlier," that is to say, pre-Raphaelite ages. Men of this stamp will praise Claude, and such other comparatively debased artists; but they cannot taste the work of the thirteenth century. (Ruskin's note.)

it hardly recognizes truth or fancy when they really exist.

§ XLIX. The fourth form of error is when the men of design envy facts; that is to say, when the temptation of closely imitating nature leads them to forget their own proper ornamental function, and when they lose the power of the composition for the sake of graphic truth; as, for instance, in the hawthorn molding so often spoken of round the porch of Bourges Cathedral, which, though very lovely, might perhaps, as we saw above, have been better, if the old builder, in his excessive desire to make it look like hawthorn, had not painted it green.

§ L. It is, however, carefully to be noted, that the two morbid conditions to which the men of facts are liable are much more dangerous and harmful than those to which the men of design are liable. The morbid state of men of design injures themselves only; that of the men of facts injures the whole world. The Chinese porcelain-painter is, indeed, not so great a man as he might be, but he does not want to break everything that is not porcelain: but the modern English fact-hunter, despising design, wants to destroy everything that does not agree with his own notions of truth, and becomes the most dangerous and despicable of iconoclasts, excited by egotism instead of religion. Again: the Bourges sculptor, painting his hawthorns green, did indeed somewhat hurt the effect of his own beautiful design, but did not prevent any one from loving hawthorn: but Sir George Beaumont, trying to make Constable paint grass brown *instead* of green, was setting himself between Constable and nature, blinding the painter, and blaspheming the work of God.

§ LI. So much, then, of the diseases of the inferior classes, caused by their envying or despising each other. It is evident that the men of the central class cannot be liable to any morbid operation of this kind, they possessing the powers of both.

But there is another order of diseases which affect all the three classes, considered with respect to their pursuit of facts. For observe, all the three classes are in some degree pursuers of facts; even the men of design not being in any case altogether independent of external truth. Now, considering them *all* as more or less searchers after truth, there is another triple division to be made of them. Everything presented to them in nature has good and evil mingled in it; and artists, considered as searchers after

truth, are again to be divided into three great classes, a right, a left, and a centre. Those on the right perceive, and pursue, the good, and leave the evil: those in the centre, the greatest, perceive and pursue the good and evil together, the whole thing as it verily is: those on the left perceive and pursue the evil, and leave the good.

§ LII. The first class, I say, take the good and leave the evil. Out of whatever is presented to them, they gather what it has of grace, and life, and light, and holiness, and leave all, or at least as much as possible, of the rest undrawn. The faces of their figures express no evil passions; the skies of their landscapes are without storm; the prevalent character of their color is brightness, and of their chiaroscuro fulness of light. The early Italian and Flemish painters, Angelico and Hemling, Perugino, Francia, Raffaele in his best time, John Bellini, and our own Stot-hard, belong eminently to this class.

§ LIII. The second, or greatest class, render all that they see in nature unhesitatingly, with a kind of divine grasp and government of the whole, sympathizing with all the good, and yet confessing, permitting, and bringing good out of the evil also. Their subject is infinite as nature, their color equally balanced between splendor and sadness, reaching occasionally the highest degrees of both, and their chiaroscuro equally balanced between light and shade.

The principal men of this class are Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Giotto, Tintoret, and Turner. Raffaele in his second time, Titian, and Rubens are transitional; the first inclining to the eclectic, and the last two to the impure class, Raffaele rarely giving all the evil, Titian and Rubens rarely all the good.

§ LIV. The last class perceive and imitate evil only. They cannot draw the trunk of a tree without blasting and shattering it, nor a sky except covered with stormy clouds; they delight in the beggary and brutality of the human race; their color is for the most part subdued or lurid, and the greatest spaces of their pictures are occupied by darkness.

Happily the examples of this class are seldom seen in perfection. Salvator Rosa and Caravaggio are the most characteristic: the other men belonging to it approach towards the central rank by imperceptible gradations, as they perceive and represent more and more of good. But Murillo, Zurbaran, Camillo Procaccini, Rembrandt, and Teniers, all belong naturally to this lower class.

§ LV. Now, observe: the three classes into which artists were previously divided, of men of fact, men of design, and men of both, are all of Divine institution; but of these latter three, the last is in no wise of Divine institution. It is entirely human, and the men who belong to it have sunk into it by their own faults. They are, so far forth, either useless or harmful men. It is indeed good that evil should be occasionally represented, even in its worst forms, but never that it should be taken delight in; and the mighty men of the central class will always give us all that is needful of it; sometimes, as Hogarth did, dwelling upon it bitterly as satirists, — but this with the more effect, because they will neither exaggerate it, nor represent it mercilessly, and without the atoning points that all evil shows to a Divinely guided glance, even at its deepest. So then, though the third class will always, I fear, in some measure exist, the two necessary classes are only the first two; and this is so far acknowledged by the general sense of men, that the basest class has been confounded with the second; and painters have been divided commonly only into two ranks, now known, I believe, throughout Europe by the names which they first received in Italy, "Puristi and Naturalisti." Since, however, in the existing state of things, the degraded or evil-loving class, though less defined than that of the Puristi, is just as vast as it is indistinct, this division has done infinite dishonor to the great faithful painters of nature: and it has long been one of the objects I have had most at heart to show that, in reality, the Purists, in their sanctity, are less separated from these natural painters than the Sensualists in their foulness; and that the difference, though less discernible, is in reality greater, between the man who pursues evil for its own sake, and him who bears with it for the sake of truth, than between this latter and the man who will not endure it at all.

§ LVI. Let us, then, endeavor briefly to mark the real relations of these three vast ranks of men, whom I shall call, for convenience in speaking of them, Purists, Naturalists, and Sensualists; not that these terms express their real characters, but I know no word, and cannot coin a convenient one, which would accurately express the opposite of Purist; and I keep the terms Purist and Naturalist in order to comply, as far as possible, with the established usage of language on the Continent. Now, observe:

in saying that nearly everything presented to us in nature has mingling in it of good and evil, I do not mean that nature is conceivably improvable, or that anything that God has made could be called evil, if we could see far enough into its uses, but that, with respect to immediate effects or appearances, it may be so, just as the hard rind or bitter kernel of a fruit may be an evil to the eater, though in the one is the protection of the fruit, and in the other its continuance. The Purist, therefore, does not mend nature, but receives from nature and from God that which is good for him; while the Sensualist fills himself "with the husks that the swine did eat."

The three classes may, therefore, be likened to men reaping wheat, of which the Purists take the fine flour, and the Sensualists the chaff and straw, but the Naturalists take all home, and make their cake of the one, and their couch of the other.

§ LVII. For instance. We know more certainly every day that whatever appears to us harmful in the universe has some beneficial or necessary operation; that the storm which destroys a harvest brightens the sunbeams for harvests yet unsown, and that the volcano which buries a city preserves a thousand from destruction. But the evil is not for the time less fearful, because we have learned it to be necessary; and we easily understand the timidity or the tenderness of the spirit which would withdraw itself from the presence of destruction, and create in its imagination a world of which the peace should be unbroken, in which the sky should not darken nor the sea rage, in which the leaf should not change nor the blossom wither. That man is greater, however, who contemplates with an equal mind the alternations of terror and of beauty; who, not rejoicing less beneath the sunny sky, can bear also to watch the bars of twilight narrowing on the horizon; and, not less sensible to the blessing of the peace of nature, can rejoice in the magnificence of the ordinances by which that peace is protected and secured. But separated from both by an immeasurable distance would be the man who delighted in convulsion and disease for their own sake; who found his daily food in the disorder of nature mingled with the suffering of humanity; and watched joyfully at the right hand of the Angel whose appointed work is to destroy as well as to accuse, while the corners of the house of feasting were struck by the wind from the wilderness.

§ LVIII. And far more is this true, when the

subject of contemplation is humanity itself. The passions of mankind are partly protective, partly beneficent, like the chaff and grain of the corn; but none without their use, none without nobleness when seen in balanced unity with the rest of the spirit which they are charged to defend. The passions of which the end is the continuance of the race; the indignation which is to arm it against injustice, or strengthen it to resist wanton injury; and the fear which lies at the root of prudence, reverence, and awe, are all honorable and beautiful, so long as man is regarded in his relations to the existing world. The religious Purist, striving to conceive him withdrawn from those relations, effaces from the countenance the traces of all transitory passion, illumines it with holy hope and love, and seals it with the serenity of heavenly peace; he conceals the forms of the body by the deep-folded garment, or else represents them under severely chastened types, and would rather paint them emaciated by the fast, or pale from the torture, than strengthened by exertion, or flushed by emotion. But the great Naturalist takes the human being in its wholeness, in its mortal as well as its spiritual strength. Capable of sounding and sympathizing with the whole range of its passions, he brings one majestic harmony out of them all; he represents it fearlessly in all its acts and thoughts, in its haste, its anger, its sensuality, and its pride, as well as in its fortitude or faith, but makes it noble in them all; he casts aside the veil from the body, and beholds the mysteries of its form like an angel looking down on an inferior creature: there is nothing which he is reluctant to behold, nothing that he is ashamed to confess; with all that lives, triumphing, falling, or suffering, he claims kindred, either in majesty or in mercy, yet standing, in a sort, afar off, unmoved even in the deepness of his sympathy; for the spirit within him is too thoughtful to be grieved, too brave to be appalled, and too pure to be polluted.

§ LIX. How far beneath these two ranks of men shall we place, in the scale of being, those whose pleasure is only in sin or in suffering; who habitually contemplate humanity in poverty or decrepitude, fury or sensuality; whose works are either temptations to its weakness, or triumphs over its ruin, and recognize no other subjects for

1 Not selfish fear, caused by want of trust in God, or of resolution in the soul. Compare *Modern Painters*, vol. II, pt. III, sect. I, chap. XIV, § XXVII. (Ruskin's note.)

thought or admiration than the subtlety of the robber, the rage of the soldier, or the joy of the Sybarite. It seems strange, when thus definitely stated, that such a school should exist. Yet consider a little what gaps and blanks would disfigure our gallery and chamber walls, in places that we have long approached with reverence, if every picture, every statue, were removed from them, of which the subject was either the vice or the misery of mankind, portrayed without any moral purpose: consider the innumerable groups having reference merely to various forms of passion, low or high; drunken revels and brawls among peasants, gambling or fighting scenes among soldiers, amours and intrigues among every class, brutal battle pieces, banditti subjects, gluts of torture and death in famine, wreck, or slaughter, for the sake merely of the excitement, — that quickening and supplying of the dull spirit that cannot be gained for it but by bathing it in blood, afterward to wither back into stained and stiffened apathy; and then that whole vast false heaven of sensual passion, full of nymphs, satyrs, graces, goddesses, and I know not what, from its high seventh circle in Correggio's Antiope, down to the Grecised ballet-dancers and smirking Cupids of the Parisian upholsterer. Sweep away all this, remorselessly, and see how much art we should have left.

§ LX. And yet these are only the grossest manifestations of the tendency of the school. There are subtler, yet not less certain, signs of it in the works of men who stand high in the world's list of sacred painters. I doubt not that the reader was surprised when I named Murillo among the men of this third rank. Yet, go into the Dulwich Gallery, and meditate for a little over that much celebrated picture of the two beggar boys, one eating, lying on the ground, the other standing beside him. We have among our own painters one who cannot indeed be set beside Murillo as a painter of Madonnas, for he is a pure Naturalist, and, never having seen a Madonna, does not paint any; but who, as a painter of beggar or peasant boys, may be set beside Murillo, or any one else, — W. Hunt. He loves peasant boys, because he finds them more roughly and picturesquely dressed, and more healthily colored, than others. And he paints all that he sees in them fearlessly; all the health and humor, and freshness and vitality, together with such awkwardness and stupidity, and what else of negative or positive harm there may be in

the creature; but yet so that on the whole we love it, and find it perhaps even beautiful, or if not, at least we see that there is capability of good in it, rather than of evil; and all is lighted up by a sunshine and sweet color that makes the smockfrock as precious as cloth of gold. But look at those two ragged and vicious vagrants that Murillo has gathered out of the street. You smile at first, because they are eating so naturally, and their roguery is so complete. But is there anything else than roguery there, or was it well for the painter to give his time to the painting of those repulsive and wicked children? Do you feel moved with any charity towards children as you look at them? Are we the least more likely to take any interest in ragged schools, or to help the next pauper child that comes in our way, because the painter has shown us a cunning beggar feeding greedily? Mark the choice of the act. He might have shown hunger in other ways, and given interest to even this act of eating, by making the face wasted, or the eye wistful. But he did not care to do this. He delighted merely in the disgusting manner of eating, the food filling the cheek; the boy is not hungry, else he would not turn round to talk and grin as he eats.

§ LXI. But observe another point in the lower figure. It lies so that the sole of the foot is turned towards the spectator; not because it would have lain less easily in another attitude, but that the painter may draw, and exhibit, the grey dust engrained in the foot. Do not call this the painting of nature: it is mere delight in foulness. The lesson, if there be any, in the picture, is not one whit the stronger. We all know that a beggar's bare foot cannot be clean; there is no need to thrust its degradation into the light, as if no human imagination were vigorous enough for its conception.

§ LXII. The position of the Sensualists, in treatment of landscape, is less distinctly marked than in that of the figure, because even the wildest passions of nature are noble: but the inclination is manifested by carelessness in marking generic form in trees and flowers; by their preferring confused and irregular arrangements of foliage or foreground to symmetrical and simple grouping; by their general choice of such picturesqueness as results from decay, disorder, and disease, rather than of that which is consistent with the perfection of the things in which it is found; and by their imperfect rendering of the elements of strength and beauty in all things. I pro-

pose to work out this subject fully in the last volume of *Modern Painters*; but I trust that enough has been here said to enable the reader to understand the relations of the three great classes of artists, and therefore also the kinds of morbid condition into which the two higher (for the last has no other than a morbid condition) are liable to fall. For, since the function of the Naturalists is to represent, as far as may be, the whole of nature, and the Purists to represent what is absolutely good for some special purpose or time, it is evident that both are liable to error from shortness of sight, and the last also from weakness of judgment. I say, in the first place, both may err from shortness of sight, from not seeing all that there is in nature; seeing only the outsides of things, or those points of them which bear least on the matter in hand. For instance, a modern continental Naturalist sees the anatomy of a limb thoroughly, but does not see its color against the sky, which latter fact is to a painter far the more important of the two. And because it is always easier to see the surface than the depth of things, the full sight of them requiring the highest powers of penetration, sympathy, and imagination, the world is full of vulgar Naturalists: not Sensualists, observe, not men who delight in evil; but men who never see the deepest good, and who bring discredit on all painting of Nature by the little that they discover in her. And the Purist, besides being liable to this same short-sightedness, is liable also to fatal errors of judgment; for he may think that good which is not so, and that the highest good which is the least. And thus the world is full of vulgar Purists, who bring discredit on all selection by the silliness of their choice; and this the more, because the very becoming

a Purist is commonly indicative of some slight degree of weakness, readiness to be offended, or narrowness of understanding of the ends of things; the greatest men being, in all times of art, Naturalists, without any exception; and the greatest Purists being those who approach nearest to the Naturalists, as Benozzo Gozzoli and Perugino. Hence there is a tendency in the Naturalists to despise the Purists, and in the Purists to be offended with the Naturalists (not understanding them, and confounding them with the Sensualists); and this is grievously harmful to both.

§ LXIII. Of the various forms of resultant mischief it is not here the place to speak: the reader may already be somewhat wearied with a statement which has led us apparently so far from our immediate subject. But the digression was necessary, in order that I might clearly define the sense in which I use the word Naturalism when I state it to be the third most essential characteristic of Gothic architecture. I mean that the Gothic builders belong to the central or greatest rank in both the classifications of artists which we have just made; that, considering all artists as either men of design, men of facts, or men of both, the Gothic builders were men of both; and that again, considering all artists as either Purists, Naturalists, or Sensualists, the Gothic builders were Naturalists.

§ LXIV. I say first, that the Gothic builders were of that central class which unites fact with design; but that the part of the work which was more especially their own was the truthfulness. Their power of artistic invention or arrangement was not greater than that of Romanesque and Byzantine workmen: by those workmen they were taught the principles, and from them received their models, of design; but to the ornamental feeling and rich fancy of the Byzantine the Gothic builder added a love of fact which is never found in the South. Both Greek and Roman used conventional foliage in their ornament, passing into something that was not foliage at all, knotting itself into strange cup-like buds or clusters, and growing out of lifeless rods instead of stems; the Gothic sculptor received these types, at first, as things that ought to be, just as we have a second time received them; but he could not rest in them. He saw there was not veracity in them, no knowledge, no vitality. Do what he would, he could not help liking the true leaves better; and cautiously, a little at a time, he put more of nature into his work, until at last it was all

I I reserve for another place the full discussion of this interesting subject, which here would have led me too far; but it must be noted, in passing, that this vulgar Purism, which rejects truth, not because it is vicious, but because it is humble, and consists not in choosing what is good, but in disguising what is rough, extends itself into every species of art. The most definite instance of it is the dressing of characters of peasantry in an opera or ballet scene: and the walls of our exhibitions are full of works of art which "exalt nature" in the same way, not by revealing what is great in the heart, but by smoothing what is coarse in the complexion. There is nothing, I believe, so vulgar, so hopeless, so indicative of an irretrievably base mind, as this species of Purism. Of healthy Purism carried to the utmost endurable length in this direction, exalting the heart first, and the features with it, perhaps the most characteristic instance I can give is Stothard's vignette to "Jorasse," in Rogers's Italy; at least it would be so if it could be seen beside a real group of Swiss girls. The poems of Rogers, compared with those of Crabbe, are admirable instances of the healthiest Purism and healthiest Naturalism in poetry. The first great Naturalists of Christian art were Orcagna and Giotto. (Ruskin's note.)

true, retaining, nevertheless, every valuable character of the original well-disciplined and designed arrangement.

§ LXV. Nor is it only in external and visible subject that the Gothic workman wrought for truth: he is as firm in his rendering of imaginative as of actual truth; that is to say, when an idea would have been by a Roman, or Byzantine, symbolically represented, the Gothic mind realizes it to the utmost. For instance, the purgatorial fire is represented in the mosaic of Torcello (Romanesque) as a red stream, longitudinally striped like a riband, descending out of the throne of Christ, and gradually extending itself to envelope the wicked. When we are once informed what this means, it is enough for its purpose; but the Gothic inventor does not leave the sign in need of interpretation. He makes the fire as like real fire as he can; and in the porch of St. Maclou at Rouen the sculptured flames burst out of the Hades gate, and flicker up, in writhing tongues of stone, through the interstices of the niches, as if the church itself were on fire. This is an extreme instance, but it is all the more illustrative of the entire difference in temper and thought between the two schools of art, and of the intense love of veracity which influenced the Gothic design.

§ LXVI. I do not say that this love of veracity is always healthy in its operation. I have above noticed the errors into which it falls from despising design; and there is another kind of error noticeable in the instance just given, in which the love of truth is too hasty, and seizes on a surface truth instead of an inner one. For in representing the Hades fire, it is not the mere *form* of the flame which needs most to be told, but its unquenchableness, its Divine ordainment and limitation, and its inner fierceness, not physical and material, but in being the expression of the wrath of God. And these things are not to be told by imitating the fire that flashes out of a bundle of sticks. If we think over his symbol a little, we shall perhaps find that the Romanesque builder told more truth in that likeness of a blood-red stream, flowing between definite shores, and out of God's throne, and expanding, as if fed by a perpetual current, into the lake wherein the wicked are cast, than the Gothic builder in those torch-flickerings about his niches. But this is not to our immediate purpose; I am not at present to insist upon the faults into which the love of truth was led in the later Gothic times, but on the feeling itself,

as a glorious and peculiar characteristic of the Northern builders. For, observe, it is not, even in the above instance, love of truth, but want of thought, which *causes* the fault. The love of truth, as such, is good, but when it is misdirected by thoughtlessness or over-excited by vanity, and either seizes on facts of small value, or gathers them chiefly that it may boast of its grasp and apprehension, its work may well become dull or offensive. Yet let us not, therefore, blame the inherent love of facts, but the incautiousness of their selection, and impertinence of their statement.

§ LXVII. I said, in the second place, that Gothic work, when referred to the arrangement of all art, as purist, naturalist, or sensualist, was naturalist. This character follows necessarily on its extreme love of truth, prevailing over the sense of beauty, and causing it to take delight in portraiture of every kind, and to express the various characters of the human countenance and form, as it did the varieties of leaves and the ruggedness of branches. And this tendency is both increased and ennobled by the same Christian humility which we saw expressed in the first character of Gothic work, its rudeness. For as that resulted from a humility which confessed the imperfection of the *workman*, so this naturalist portraiture is rendered more faithful by the humility which confesses the imperfection of the *subject*. The Greek sculptor could neither bear to confess his own feebleness, nor to tell the faults of the forms that he portrayed. But the Christian workman, believing that all is finally to work together for good, freely confesses both, and neither seeks to disguise his own roughness of work, nor his subject's roughness of make. Yet this frankness being joined, for the most part, with depth of religious feeling in other directions, and especially with charity, there is sometimes a tendency to Purism in the best Gothic sculpture; so that it frequently reaches great dignity of form and tenderness of expression, yet never so as to lose the veracity of portraiture, wherever portraiture is possible: not exalting its kings into demi-gods, nor its saints into archangels, but giving what kingliness and sanctity was in them, to the full, mixed with due record of their faults; and this in the most part with a great indifference like that of Scripture history, which sets down, with unmoved and unexcusing resoluteness, the virtues and errors of all men of whom it speaks, often leaving the reader

to form his own estimate of them, without an indication of the judgment of the historian. And this veracity is carried out by the Gothic sculptors in the minuteness and generality, as well as the equity, of their delineation: for they do not limit their art to the portraiture of saints and kings, but introduce the most familiar scenes and most simple subjects; filling up the backgrounds of Scripture histories with vivid and curious representations of the commonest incidents of daily life, and availing themselves of every occasion in which, either as a symbol, or an explanation of a scene or time, the things familiar to the eye of the workman could be introduced and made of account. Hence Gothic sculpture and painting are not only full of valuable portraiture of the greatest men, but copious records of all the domestic customs and inferior arts of the ages in which it flourished.¹

§ LXVII. There is, however, one direction in which the Naturalism of the Gothic workmen is peculiarly manifested; and this direction is even more characteristic of the school than the Naturalism itself; I mean their peculiar fondness for the forms of Vegetation. In rendering the various circumstances of daily life, Egyptian and Ninevite sculpture is as frank and as diffuse as the Gothic. From the highest pomps of state or triumphs of battle, to the most trivial domestic arts and amusements, all is taken advantage of to fill the field of granite with the perpetual interest of a crowded drama; and the early Lombardic and Romanesque sculpture is equally copious in its description of the familiar circumstances of war and the chase. But in all the scenes portrayed by the workmen of these nations, vegetation occurs only as an explanatory accessory; the reed is introduced to mark the course of the river, or the tree to mark the covert of the wild beast, or the ambush of the enemy, but there is no especial interest in the forms of the vegetation strong enough to induce them to make it a subject of separate and accurate study. Again, among the nations who followed the arts of design exclusively, the forms of foliage introduced were meagre and general, and their real intricacy and life were neither admired nor expressed. But to the Gothic

workman the living foliage became a subject of intense affection, and he struggled to render all its characters with as much accuracy as was compatible with the laws of his design and the nature of his material, not unfrequently tempted in his enthusiasm to transgress the one and disguise the other.

§ LXIX. There is a peculiar significance in this, indicative both of higher civilization and gentler temperament, than had before been manifested in architecture. Rudeness, and the love of change, which we have insisted upon as the first elements of Gothic, are also elements common to all healthy schools. But here is a softer element mingled with them, peculiar to the Gothic itself. The rudeness or ignorance which would have been painfully exposed in the treatment of the human form, are still not so great as to prevent the successful rendering of the wayside herbage; and the love of change, which becomes morbid and feverish in following the haste of the hunter, and the rage of the combatant, is at once soothed and satisfied as it watches the wandering of the tendril, and the budding of the flower. Nor is this all: the new direction of mental interest marks an infinite change in the means and the habits of life. The nations whose chief support was in the chase, whose chief interest was in the battle, whose chief pleasure was in the banquet, would take small care respecting the shapes of leaves and flowers; and notice little in the forms of the forest trees which sheltered them, except the signs indicative of the wood which would make the toughest lance, the closest roof, or the clearest fire. The affectionate observation of the grace and outward character of vegetation is the sure sign of a more tranquil and gentle existence, sustained by the gifts, and gladdened by the splendor, of the earth. In that careful distinction of species, and richness of delicate and undisturbed organization, which characterize the Gothic design, there is the history of rural and thoughtful life, influenced by habitual tenderness, and devoted to subtle inquiry; and every discriminating and delicate touch of the chisel, as it rounds the petal or guides the branch, is a prophecy of the development of the entire body of the natural sciences, beginning with that of medicine, of the recovery of literature, and the establishment of the most necessary principles of domestic wisdom and national peace.

§ LXX. I have before alluded to the strange and vain supposition, that the original con-

¹ The best art either represents the facts of its own day, or, if facts of the past, expresses them with accessories of the time in which the work was done. All good art, representing past events, is therefore full of the most frank anachronism, and always ought to be. No painter has any business to be an antiquarian. We do not want his impressions or suppositions respecting things that are past. We want his clear assertions respecting things present. (Ruskin's note.)

ception of Gothic architecture had been derived from vegetation, — from the symmetry of avenues, and the interlacing of branches. It is a supposition which never could have existed for a moment in the mind of any person acquainted with early Gothic; but, however idle as a theory, it is most valuable as a testimony to the character of the perfected style. It is precisely because the reverse of this theory is the fact, because the Gothic did not arise out of, but developed itself into, a resemblance to vegetation, that this resemblance is so instructive as an indication of the temper of the builders. It was no chance suggestion of the form of an arch from the bending of a bough, but a gradual and continual discovery of a beauty in natural forms which could be more and more perfectly transferred into those of stone, that influenced at once the heart of the people, and the form of the edifice. The Gothic architecture arose in massy and mountainous strength, axe-hewn, and iron-bound, block heaved upon block by the monk's enthusiasm and the soldier's force; and cramped and stanchioned into such weight of grisly wall, as might bury the anchorite in darkness, and beat back the utmost storm of battle, suffering but by the same narrow crosslet the passing of the sunbeam, or of the arrow. Gradually, as that monkish enthusiasm became more thoughtful, and as the sound of war became more and more intermittent beyond the gates of the convent or the keep, the stony pillar grew slender and the vaulted roof grew light, till they had wreathed themselves into the semblance of the summer woods at their fairest, and of the dead field-flowers, long trodden down in blood, sweet monumental statues were set to bloom for ever, beneath the porch of the temple, or the canopy of the tomb.

§ LXXI. Nor is it only as a sign of greater gentleness or refinement of mind, but as a proof of the best possible direction of this refinement, that the tendency of the Gothic to the expression of vegetative life is to be admired. That sentence of Genesis, "I have given thee every green herb for meat," like all the rest of the book, has a profound symbolical as well as a literal meaning. It is not merely the nourishment of the body, but the food of the soul, that is intended. The green herb is, of all nature, that which is most essential to the healthy spiritual life of man. Most of us do not need fine scenery; the precipice and the mountain peak are not intended to be seen by all men, — perhaps

their power is greatest over those who are unaccustomed to them. But trees, and fields, and flowers were made for all, and are necessary for all. God has connected the labor which is essential to the bodily sustenance, with the pleasures which are healthiest for the heart; and while He made the ground stubborn, He made its herbage fragrant, and its blossoms fair. The proudest architecture that man can build has no higher honor than to bear the image and recall the memory of that grass of the field which is, at once, the type and the support of his existence; the goodly building is then most glorious when it is sculptured into the likeness of the leaves of Paradise; and the great Gothic spirit, as we showed it to be noble in its disquietude, is also noble in its hold of nature; it is, indeed, like the dove of Noah, in that she found no rest upon the face of the waters, — but like her in this also, "LO, IN HER MOUTH WAS AN OLIVE BRANCH, PLUCKED OFF."

§ LXXII. The fourth essential element of the Gothic mind was above stated to be the sense of the GROTESQUE; but I shall defer the endeavor to define this most curious and subtle character until we have occasion to examine one of the divisions of the Renaissance schools, which was morbidly influenced by it (Vol. III, Chap. III). It is the less necessary to insist upon it here, because every reader familiar with Gothic architecture must understand what I mean, and will, I believe, have no hesitation in admitting that the tendency to delight in fantastic and ludicrous, as well as in sublime, images, is a universal instinct of the Gothic imagination.

§ LXXIII. The fifth element above named was RIGIDITY; and this character I must endeavor carefully to define, for neither the word I have used, nor any other that I can think of, will express it accurately. For I mean, not merely stable, but *active* rigidity; the peculiar energy which gives tension to movement, and stiffness to resistance, which makes the fiercest lightning forked rather than curved, and the stoutest oak-branch angular rather than bending, and is as much seen in the quivering of the lance as in the glittering of the icicle.

§ LXXIV. I have before had occasion (Vol. I, Chap. XIII, § vii) to note some manifestations of this energy or fixedness; but it must be still more attentively considered here, as it shows itself throughout the whole structure and decoration of Gothic work. Egyptian and Greek buildings stand, for the most part, by their own weight and mass

one stone passively incumbent on another: but in the Gothic vaults and traceries there is a stiffness analogous to that of the bones of a limb, or fibres of a tree; an elastic tension and communication of force from part to part, and also a studious expression of this throughout every visible line of the building. And, in like manner, the Greek and Egyptian ornament is either mere surface engraving, as if the face of the wall had been stamped with a seal, or its lines are flowing, lithe, and luxuriant; in either case, there is no expression of energy in the framework of the ornament itself. But the Gothic ornament stands out in prickly independence, and frosty fortitude, jutting into crockets, and freezing into pinnacles; here starting up into a monster, there germinating into a blossom; anon knitting itself into a branch, alternately thorny, bossy, and bristly, or writhed into every form of nervous entanglement; but, even when most graceful, never for an instant languid, always quickset; erring, if at all, ever on the side of brusquerie.

§ LXXV. The feelings or habits in the workman which give rise to this character in the work, are more complicated and various than those indicated by any other sculptural expression hitherto named. There is, first, the habit of hard and rapid working; the industry of the tribes of the North, quickened by the coldness of the climate, and giving an expression of sharp energy to all they do (as above noted, Vol. I, Chap. XIII, § VII), as opposed to the languor of the Southern tribes, however much of fire there may be in the heart of that languor, for lava itself may flow languidly. There is also the habit of finding enjoyment in the signs of cold, which is never found, I believe, in the inhabitants of countries south of the Alps. Cold is to them an unredeemed evil, to be suffered, and forgotten as soon as may be; but the long winter of the North forces the Goth (I mean the Englishman, Frenchman, Dane, or German), if he would lead a happy life at all, to find sources of happiness in foul weather as well as fair, and to rejoice in the leafless as well as in the shady forest. And this we do with all our hearts; finding perhaps nearly as much contentment by the Christmas fire as in the summer sunshine, and gaining health and strength on the ice-fields of winter, as well as among the meadows of spring. So that there is nothing adverse or painful to our feelings in the cramped and stiffened structure of vegetation checked by cold; and instead of seeking, like the Southern sculptor, to express

only the softness of leafage nourished in all tenderness, and tempted into all luxuriance by warm winds and glowing rays, we find pleasure in dwelling upon the crabbed, perverse, and morose animation of plants that have known little kindness from earth or heaven, but, season after season, have had their best efforts palsied by frost, their brightest buds buried under snow, and their goodliest limbs lopped by tempest.

§ LXXVI. There are many subtle sympathies and affections which join to confirm the Gothic mind in this peculiar choice of subject; and when we add to the influence of these, the necessities consequent upon the employment of a rougher material, compelling the workman to seek for vigor of effect, rather than refinement of texture or accuracy of form, we have direct and manifest causes for much of the difference between the Northern and Southern cast of conception: but there are indirect causes holding a far more important place in the Gothic heart, though less immediate in their influence on design. Strength of will, independence of character, resoluteness of purpose, impatience of undue control, and that general tendency to set the individual reason against authority, and the individual deed against destiny, which, in the Northern tribes, has opposed itself throughout all ages to the languid submission, in the Southern, of thought to tradition, and purpose to fatality, are all more or less traceable in the rigid lines, vigorous and various masses, and daringly projecting and independent structure of the Northern Gothic ornament: while the opposite feelings are in like manner legible in the graceful and softly guided waves and wreathed bands, in which Southern decoration is constantly disposed; in its tendency to lose its independence, and fuse itself into the surface of the masses upon which it is traced; and in the expression seen so often, in the arrangement of those masses themselves, of an abandonment of their strength to an inevitable necessity, or a listless repose.

§ LXXVII. There is virtue in the measure, and error in the excess, of both these characters of mind, and in both of the styles which they have created; the best architecture, and the best temper, are those which unite them both; and this fifth impulse of the Gothic heart is therefore that which needs most caution in its indulgence. It is more definitely Gothic than any other, but the best Gothic building is not that which is *most* Gothic: it can hardly be too frank in its con-

fession of rudeness, hardly too rich in its changefulness, hardly too faithful in its naturalism; but it may go too far in its rigidity, and, like the great Puritan spirit in its extreme, lose itself either in frivolity of division, or perversity of purpose.¹ It actually did so in its later times; but it is gladdening to remember that in its utmost nobleness, the very temper which has been thought most adverse to it, the Protestant spirit of self-dependence and inquiry, was expressed in its every line. Faith and aspiration there were, in every Christian ecclesiastical building, from the first century to the fifteenth; but the moral habits to which England in this age owes the kind of greatness that she has, — the habits of philosophical investigation, of accurate thought, of domestic seclusion and independence, of stern self-reliance, and sincere upright searching into religious truth, — were only traceable in the features which were the distinctive creation of the Gothic schools, in the veined foliage, and thorny fretwork, and shadowy niche, and buttressed pier, and fearless height of subtle pinnacle and crested tower, sent like an “unperplexed question up to Heaven.”²

§ LXXVIII. Last, because the least essential, of the constituent elements of this noble school, was placed that of REDUNDANCE, — the uncalculating bestowal of the wealth of its labor. There is, indeed, much Gothic, and that of the best period, in which this element is hardly traceable, and which depends for its effect almost exclusively on loveliness of simple design and grace of uninvolved proportion: still, in the most characteristic buildings, a certain portion of their effect depends upon accumulation of ornament; and many of those which have most influence on the minds of men, have attained it by means of this attribute alone. And although, by careful study of the school, it is possible to arrive at a condition of taste which shall be better contented by a few perfect lines than by a whole façade covered with fretwork, the building which only satisfies such a taste is not to be considered the best. For the very first requirement of

Gothic architecture being, as we saw above, that it shall both admit the aid, and appeal to the admiration, of the rudest as well as the most refined minds, the richness of the work is, paradoxical as the statement may appear, a part of its humility. No architecture is so haughty as that which is simple; which refuses to address the eye, except in a few clear and forceful lines; which implies, in offering so little to our regards, that all it has offered is perfect; and disdains, either by the complexity or the attractiveness of its features, to embarrass our investigation, or betray us into delight. That humility, which is the very life of the Gothic school, is shown not only in the imperfection, but in the accumulation, of ornament. The inferior rank of the workman is often shown as much in the richness, as the roughness, of his work; and if the co-operation of every hand, and the sympathy of every heart, are to be received, we must be content to allow the redundancy which disguises the failure of the feeble, and wins the regard of the inattentive. There are, however, far nobler interests mingling, in the Gothic heart, with the rude love of decorative accumulation: a magnificent enthusiasm, which feels as if it never could do enough to reach the fulness of its ideal; an unselfishness of sacrifice, which would rather cast fruitless labor before the altar than stand idle in the market; and, finally, a profound sympathy with the fulness and wealth of the material universe, rising out of that Naturalism whose operation we have already endeavored to define. The sculptor who sought for his models among the forest leaves, could not but quickly and deeply feel that complexity need not involve the loss of grace, nor richness that of repose; and every hour which he spent in the study of the minute and various work of Nature, made him feel more forcibly the barrenness of what was best in that of man: nor is it to be wondered at, that, seeing her perfect and exquisite creations poured forth in a profusion which conception could not grasp nor calculation sum, he should think that it ill became him to be niggardly of his own rude craftsmanship; and where he saw throughout the universe a faultless beauty lavished on measureless spaces of brodered field and blooming mountain, to grudge his poor and imperfect labor to the few stones that he had raised one upon another, for habitation or memorial. The years of his life passed away before his task was accomplished; but generation succeeded genera-

¹ See the account of the meeting at Talla Linns, in 1682, given in the fourth chapter of the *Heart of Midlothian*. At length they arrived at the conclusion that “they who owned (or allowed) such names as Monday, Tuesday, January, February, and so forth, served themselves heirs to the same if not greater punishment than had been denounced against the idolaters of old.”

(Ruskin's note.)

² See the beautiful description of Florence in Elizabeth Browning's *Casa Guidi's Windows*, which is not only a noble poem, but the only book I have seen which, favoring the Liberal cause in Italy, gives a just account of the incapacities of the modern Italian. (Ruskin's note.)

tion with unwearied enthusiasm, and the cathedral front was at last lost in the tapestry of its traceries, like a rock among the thickets and herbage of spring.¹

UNTO THIS LAST

1860

In 1860 Ruskin began a series of papers on political economy in the *Cornhill Magazine* then edited by W. M. Thackeray, which were republished in *Harper's Magazine*. He undertook to combat the views of the orthodox economists, such as John Stuart Mill, in regard to the law of supply and demand, wages, capital, and especially the nature of wealth, the measure of which Ruskin insisted was to be real and intrinsic value, and not merely value in exchange. He later included in his protest the taking of rent and interest. The series ceased after four numbers in consequence of the outcry from readers of the magazine. The articles appeared in book form in 1862. *Unto This Last* is the development into political economy of the social views which began to take form in the chapter on "The Nature of Gothic." Ruskin wrote of these essays in his preface: "I believe them to be the best, that is to say, the truest, rightest-worded, and most serviceable things I have ever written." . . .

ESSAY I

THE ROOTS OF HONOR

I. Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious — certainly the least creditable — is the modern *soi-disant* science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection.

Of course, as in the instances of alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, and other such popular creeds, political economy has a plausible idea at the root of it. "The social affections," says the economist, "are accidental and disturbing elements in human nature; but avarice and the desire of progress are constant elements. Let us eliminate the inconstants, and, considering the human being merely as a covetous machine, examine by what laws of labor, purchase, and sale, the greatest accumulative result in wealth is attainable. Those laws once determined, it

will be for each individual afterwards to introduce as much of the disturbing affectionate element as he chooses, and to determine for himself the result on the new conditions so supposed."

II. This would be a perfectly logical and successful method of analysis, if the accidentals afterwards to be introduced were of the same nature as the powers first examined. Supposing a body in motion to be influenced by constant and inconstant forces, it is usually the simplest way of examining its course to trace it first under the persistent conditions, and afterwards introduce the causes of variation. But the disturbing elements in the social problem are not of the same nature as the constant ones; they alter the essence of the creature under examination the moment they are added; they operate, not mathematically, but chemically, introducing conditions which render all our previous knowledge unavailable. We made learned experiments upon pure nitrogen, and have convinced ourselves that it is a very manageable gas; but behold! the thing which we have practically to deal with is its chloride; and this, the moment we touch it on our established principles, sends us and our apparatus through the ceiling.

III. Observe, I neither impugn nor doubt the conclusions of the science, if its terms are accepted. I am simply uninterested in them, as I should be in those of a science of gymnastics which assumed that men had no skeletons. It might be shown, on that supposition, that it would be advantageous to roll the students up into pellets, flatten them into cakes, or stretch them into cables; and that when these results were effected, the reinsertion of the skeleton would be attended with various inconveniences to their constitution. The reasoning might be admirable, the conclusions true, and the science deficient only in applicability. Modern political economy stands on a precisely similar basis. Assuming, not that the human being has no skeleton, but that it is all skeleton, it founds an ossifant theory of progress on this negation of a soul; and having shown the utmost that may be made of bones, and constructed a number of interesting geometrical figures with death's-heads and humeri, successfully proves the inconvenience of the reappearance of a soul among these corpuscular structures. I do not deny the truth of this theory: I simply deny its applicability to the present phase of the world.

IV. This inapplicability has been curiously

¹ The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of the outward forms in which the moral or imaginative elements which composed the inner spirit of Gothic architecture are exhibited.

manifested during the embarrassment caused by the late strikes of our workmen.¹ Here occurs one of the simplest cases, in a pertinent and positive form, of the first vital problem which political economy has to deal with (the relation between employer and employed); and at a severe crisis, when lives in multitudes, and wealth in masses, are at stake, the political economists are helpless — practically mute; no demonstrable solution of the difficulty can be given by them, such as may convince or calm the opposing parties. Obstinate the masters take one view of the matter; obstinately the operatives another; and no political science can set them at one.

v. It would be strange if it could, it being not by "science" of any kind that men were ever intended to be set at one. Disputant after disputant vainly strives to show that the interests of the masters are, or are not, antagonistic to those of the men: none of the pleaders ever seeming to remember that it does not absolutely or always follow that the persons must be antagonistic because their interests are. If there is only a crust of bread in the house, and mother and children are starving, their interests are not the same. If the mother eats it, the children want it; if the children eat it, the mother must go hungry to her work. Yet it does not necessarily follow that there will be "antagonism" between them, that they will fight for the crust, and that the mother, being strongest, will get it, and eat it. Neither, in any other case, whatever the relations of the persons may be, can it be assumed for certain that, because their interests are diverse, they must necessarily regard each other with hostility, and use violence or cunning to obtain the advantage.

vi. Even if this were so, and it were as just as it is convenient to consider men as actuated by no other moral influences than those which affect rats or swine, the logical conditions of the question are still indeterminable. It can never be shown generally either that the interests of master and laborer are alike, or that they are opposed; for, according to circumstances, they may be either. It is, indeed, always the interest of both that the work should be rightly done, and a just price obtained for it; but, in the division of profits, the gain of the one may or may not be the loss of the other. It is not the master's interest to pay wages so low as to leave the men sickly and depressed, nor the workman's

interest to be paid high wages if the smallness of the master's profit hinders him from enlarging his business, or conducting it in a safe and liberal way. A stoker ought not to desire high pay if the company is too poor to keep the engine-wheels in repair.

vii: And the varieties of circumstance which influence these reciprocal interests are so endless, that all endeavor to deduce rules of action from balance of expediency is in vain. And it is meant to be in vain. For no human actions ever were intended by the Maker of men to be guided by balances of expediency, but by balances of justice. He has therefore rendered all endeavors to determine expediency futile for evermore. No man ever knew, or can know, what will be the ultimate result to himself, or to others, of any given line of conduct. But every man may know, and most of us do know, what is a just and unjust act. And all of us may know also, that the consequences of justice will be ultimately the best possible, both to others and ourselves, though we can neither say what *is* best, nor how it is likely to come to pass.

I have said balances of justice, meaning, in the term justice, to include affection, — such affection as one man *owes* to another. All right relations between master and operative, and all their best interests, ultimately depend on these.

viii. We shall find the best and simplest illustration of the relations of master and operative in the position of domestic servants.

We will suppose that the master of a household desires only to get as much work out of his servants as he can, at the rate of wages he gives. He never allows them to be idle; feeds them as poorly and lodges them as ill as they will endure, and in all things pushes his requirements to the exact point beyond which he cannot go without forcing the servant to leave him. In doing this, there is no violation on his part of what is commonly called "justice." He agrees with the domestic for his whole time and service, and takes them; — the limits of hardship in treatment being fixed by the practice of other masters in his neighborhood; that is to say, by the current rate of wages for domestic labor. If the servant can get a better place, he is free to take one, and the master can only tell what is the real market value of his labor, by requiring as much as he will give.

This is the politico-economical view of the case, according to the doctors of that science; who assert that by this procedure the great-

¹ The reference is to the builders' strike in the autumn of 1859.

est average of work will be obtained from the servant, and therefore, the greatest benefit to the community, and through the community, by reversion, to the servant himself.

That, however, is not so. It would be so if the servant were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But he being, on the contrary, an engine whose motive power is a Soul, the force of this very peculiar agent, as an unknown quantity, enters into all the political economist's equations, without his knowledge, and falsifies every one of their results. The largest quantity of work will not be done by this curious engine for pay, or under pressure, or by help of any kind of fuel which may be supplied by the chaldron. It will be done only when the motive force, that is to say, the will or spirit of the creature, is brought to its greatest strength by its own proper fuel; namely, by the affections.

IX. It may indeed happen, and does happen often, that if the master is a man of sense and energy, a large quantity of material work may be done under mechanical pressure, enforced by strong will and guided by wise method; also it may happen, and does happen often, that if the master is indolent and weak (however good-natured), a very small quantity of work, and that bad, may be produced by the servant's undirected strength, and contemptuous gratitude. But the universal law of the matter is that, assuming any given quantity of energy and sense in master and servant, the greatest material result obtainable by them will be, not through antagonism to each other, but through affection for each other; and that if the master, instead of endeavoring to get as much work as possible from the servant, seeks rather to render his appointed and necessary work beneficial to him, and to forward his interests in all just and wholesome ways, the real amount of work ultimately done, or of good rendered, by the person so cared for, will indeed be the greatest possible.

Observe, I say, "of good rendered," for a servant's work is not necessarily or always the best thing he can give his master. But good of all kinds, whether in material service, in protective watchfulness of his master's interest and credit, or in joyful readiness to seize unexpected and irregular occasions of help.

Nor is this one whit less generally true because indulgence will be frequently abused,

and kindness met with ingratitude. For the servant who, gently treated, is ungrateful, treated ungenly, will be revengeful; and the man who is dishonest to a liberal master will be injurious to an unjust one.

X. In any case, and with any person, this unselfish treatment will produce the most effective return. Observe, I am here considering the affections wholly as a motive power; not at all as things in themselves desirable or noble, or in any other way abstractedly good. I look at them simply as an anomalous force, rendering every one of the ordinary political economist's calculations nugatory; while, even if he desired to introduce this new element into his estimates, he has no power of dealing with it; for the affections only become a true motive power when they ignore every other motive and condition of political economy. Treat the servant kindly, with the idea of turning his gratitude to account, and you will get, as you deserve, no gratitude, nor any value for your kindness; but treat him kindly without any economical purpose, and all economical purposes will be answered; in this, as in all other matters, whosoever will save his life shall lose it, whoso loses it shall find it.¹

XI. The next clearest and simplest example of relation between master and operative is that which exists between the commander of a regiment and his men.

Supposing the officer only desires to apply the rules of discipline so as, with least trouble to himself, to make the regiment most effective

¹ The difference between the two modes of treatment, and between their effective material results, may be seen very accurately by a comparison of the relations of Esther and Charlie in *Bleak House*, with those of Miss Brass and the Marchioness in *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

The essential value and truth of Dickens's writings have been unwisely lost sight of by many thoughtful persons, merely because he presents his truth with some color of caricature. Unwisely, because Dickens's caricature, though often gross, is never mistaken. Allowing for his manner of telling them, the things he tells us are always true. I wish that he could think it right to limit his brilliant exaggeration to works written only for public amusement; and when he takes up a subject of high national importance, such as that which he handled in *Hard Times*, that he would use severer and more accurate analysis. The usefulness of that work (to my mind, in several respects, the greatest he has written) is with many persons seriously diminished because Mr. Bounderby is a dramatic monster, instead of a characteristic example of a worldly master; and Stephen Blackpool a dramatic perfection, instead of a characteristic example of an honest workman. But let us not lose the use of Dickens's wit and insight, because he chooses to speak in a circle of stage fire. He is entirely right in his main drift and purpose in every book he has written; and all of them, but especially *Hard Times*, should be studied with close and earnest care by persons interested in social questions. They will find much that is partial, and, because partial, apparently unjust; but if they examine all the evidence on the other side, which Dickens seems to overlook, it will appear, after all their trouble, that his view was the finally right one, grossly and sharply told. (Ruskin's note.)

tive, he will not be able, by any rules, or administration of rules, on this selfish principle, to develop the full strength of his subordinates. If a man of sense and firmness, he may, as in the former instance, produce a better result than would be obtained by the irregular kindness of a weak officer; but let the sense and firmness be the same in both cases, and assuredly the officer who has the most direct personal relations with his men, the most care for their interests, and the most value for their lives, will develop their effective strength, through their affection for his own person, and trust in his character, to a degree wholly unattainable by other means. The law applies still more stringently as the numbers concerned are larger; a charge may often be successful, though the men dislike their officers; a battle has rarely been won, unless they loved their general.

XII. Passing from these simple examples to the more complicated relations existing between a manufacturer and his workmen, we are met first by certain curious difficulties, resulting, apparently, from a harder and colder state of moral elements. It is easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection existing among soldiers for the colonel. Not so easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection among cotton-spinners for the proprietor of the mill. A body of men associated for purposes of robbery (as a Highland clan in ancient times) shall be animated by perfect affection, and every member of it be ready to lay down his life for the life of his chief. But a band of men associated for purposes of legal production and accumulation is usually animated, it appears, by no such emotions, and none of them are in anywise willing to give his life for the life of his chief. Not only are we met by this apparent anomaly, in moral matters, but by others connected with it, in administration of system. For a servant or a soldier is engaged at a definite rate of wages, for a definite period; but a workman at a rate of wages variable according to the demand for labor, and with the risk of being at any time thrown out of his situation by chances of trade. Now, as, under these contingencies, no action of the affections can take place, but only an explosive action of *disaffections*, two points offer themselves for consideration in the matter.

The first — How far the rate of wages may be so regulated as not to vary with the demand for labor.

The second — How far it is possible that

bodies of workmen may be engaged and maintained at such fixed rate of wages (whatever the state of trade may be), without enlarging or diminishing their number, so as to give them permanent interest in the establishment with which they are connected, like that of the domestic servants in an old family, or an *esprit de corps*, like that of the soldiers in a crack regiment.

XIII. The first question is, I say, how far it may be possible to fix the rate of wages irrespectively of the demand for labor.

Perhaps one of the most curious facts in the history of human error is the denial by the common political economist of the possibility of thus regulating wages; while, for all the important, and much of the unimportant, labor on the earth, wages are already so regulated.

We do not sell our prime-ministership by Dutch auction; nor, on the decease of a bishop, whatever may be the general advantages of simony, do we (yet) offer his diocese to the clergyman who will take the episcopacy at the lowest contract. We (with exquisite sagacity of political economy!) do indeed sell commissions, but not openly, generalships: sick, we do not inquire for a physician who takes less than a guinea; litigious, we never think of reducing six-and-eightpence to four-and-sixpence; caught in a shower, we do not canvass the cabmen, to find one who values his driving at less than sixpence a mile.

It is true that in all these cases there is, and in every conceivable case there must be, ultimate reference to the presumed difficulty of the work, or number of candidates for the office. If it were thought that the labor necessary to make a good physician would be gone through by a sufficient number of students with the prospect of only half-guinea fees, public consent would soon withdraw the unnecessary half-guinea. In this ultimate sense, the price of labor is indeed always regulated by the demand for it; but so far as the practical and immediate administration of the matter is regarded, the best labor always has been, and is, as *all* labor ought to be, paid by an invariable standard.

xiv. "What!" the reader perhaps answers amazedly: "pay good and bad workmen alike?"

Certainly. The difference between one prelate's sermons and his successor's, — or between one physician's opinion and another's, — is far greater, as respects the

qualities of mind involved, and far more important in result to you personally, than the difference between good and bad laying of bricks (though that is greater than most people suppose). Yet you pay with equal fee, contentedly, the good and bad workmen upon your soul, and the good and bad workmen upon your body; much more may you pay, contentedly, with equal fees, the good and bad workmen upon your house.

"Nay, but I choose my physician and (?) my clergyman, thus indicating my sense of the quality of their work." By all means, also, choose your bricklayer; that is the proper reward of the good workman, to be "chosen." The natural and right system respecting all labor is, that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the good, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum.

xv. This equality of wages, then, being the first object towards which we have to discover the directest available road; the second is, as above stated, that of maintaining constant numbers of workmen in employment, whatever may be the accidental demand for the article they produce.

I believe the sudden and extensive inequalities of demand which necessarily arise in the mercantile operations of an active nation, constitute the only essential difficulty which has to be overcome in a just organization of labor. The subject opens into too many branches to admit of being investigated in a paper of this kind; but the following general facts bearing on it may be noted.

The wages which enable any workman to live are necessarily higher, if his work is liable to intermission, than if it is assured and continuous; and however severe the struggle for work may become, the general law will always hold, that men must get more daily pay if, on the average, they can only calculate on work three days a week, than they would require if they were sure of work six days a week. Supposing that a man cannot live on less than a shilling a day, his seven shillings he must get, either for three days' violent work, or six days' deliberate work. The tendency of all modern mercantile operations is to throw both wages and trade into the form of a lottery, and to make the workman's pay depend on intermittent exertion,

and the principal's profit on dexterously used chance.

xvi. In what partial degree, I repeat, this may be necessary, in consequence of the activities of modern trade, I do not here investigate; contenting myself with the fact, that in its fatallest aspects it is assuredly unnecessary, and results merely from love of gambling on the part of the masters, and from ignorance and sensuality in the men. The masters cannot bear to let any opportunity of gain escape them, and frantically rush at every gap and breach in the walls of Fortune, raging to be rich, and affronting, with impatient covetousness, every risk of ruin; while the men prefer three days of violent labor, and three days of drunkenness, to six days of moderate work and wise rest. There is no way in which a principal, who really desires to help his workmen, may do it more effectually than by checking these disorderly habits both in himself and them; keeping his own business operations on a scale which will enable him to pursue them securely, not yielding to temptations of precarious gain; and, at the same time, leading his workmen into regular habits of labor and life, either by inducing them rather to take low wages in the form of a fixed salary, than high wages, subject to the chance of their being thrown out of work; or, if this be impossible, by discouraging the system of violent exertion for nominally high day wages, and leading the men to take lower pay for more regular labor.

In effecting any radical changes of this kind, doubtless there would be great inconvenience and loss incurred by all the originators of movement. That which can be done with perfect convenience and without loss, is not always the thing that most needs to be done, or which we are most imperatively required to do.

xvii. I have already alluded to the difference hitherto existing between regiments of men associated for purposes of violence, and for purposes of manufacture; in that the former appear capable of self-sacrifice — the latter, not; which singular fact is the real reason of the general lowness of estimate in which the profession of commerce is held, as compared with that of arms. Philosophically, it does not, at first sight, appear reasonable (many writers have endeavored to prove it unreasonable) that a peaceable and rational person, whose trade is buying and selling, should be held in less honor than an unpeaceable and often irrational person,

whose trade is slaying. Nevertheless, the consent of mankind has always, in spite of the philosophers, given precedence to the soldier.

And this is right.

For the soldier's trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain. This, without well knowing its own meaning, the world honors it for. A bravo's trade is slaying; but the world has never respected bravos more than merchants: the reason it honors the soldier is, because he holds his life at the service of the State. Reckless he may be — fond of pleasure or of adventure — all kinds of bye-motives and mean impulses may have determined the choice of his profession, and may affect (to all appearance exclusively) his daily conduct in it; but our estimate of him is based on this ultimate fact — of which we are well assured — that, put him in a fortress breach, with all the pleasures of the world behind him, and only death and his duty in front of him, he will keep his face to the front; and he knows that this choice may be put to him at any moment, and has beforehand taken his part — virtually takes such part continually — does, in reality, die daily.

XVIII. Not less is the respect we pay to the lawyer and physician, founded ultimately on their self-sacrifice. Whatever the learning or acuteness of a great lawyer, our chief respect for him depends on our belief that, set in a judge's seat, he will strive to judge justly, come of it what may. Could we suppose that he would take bribes, and use his acuteness and legal knowledge to give plausibility to iniquitous decisions, no degree of intellect would win for him our respect. Nothing will win it, short of our tacit conviction, that in all important acts of his life justice is first with him; his own interest, second.

In the case of a physician, the ground of the honor we render him is clearer still. Whatever his science, we should shrink from him in horror if we found him regard his patients merely as subjects to experiment upon; much more, if we found that, receiving bribes from persons interested in their deaths, he was using his best skill to give poison in the mask of medicine.

Finally, the principle holds with utmost clearness as it respects clergymen. No goodness of disposition will excuse want of science in a physician or of shrewdness in an advocate; but a clergyman, even though his power of intellect be small, is respected on the presumed ground of his unselfishness and serviceableness.

XIX. Now there can be no question but that the tact, foresight, decision, and other mental powers, required for the successful management of a large mercantile concern, if not such as could be compared with those of a great lawyer, general, or divine, would at least match the general conditions of mind required in the subordinate officers of a ship, or of a regiment, or in the curate of a country parish. If, therefore, all the efficient members of the so-called liberal professions are still, somehow, in public estimate of honor, preferred before the head of a commercial firm, the reason must lie deeper than in the measurement of their several powers of mind.

And the essential reason for such preference will be found to lie in the fact that the merchant is presumed to act always selfishly. His work may be very necessary to the community; but the motive of it is understood to be wholly personal. The merchant's first object in all his dealings must be (the public believe) to get as much for himself, and leave as little to his neighbor (or customer) as possible. Enforcing this upon him, by political statute, as the necessary principle of his action; recommending it to him on all occasions, and themselves reciprocally adopting it; proclaiming vociferously, for law of the universe, that a buyer's function is to cheapen, and a seller's to cheat, — the public, nevertheless, involuntarily condemn the man of commerce for his compliance with their own statement, and stamp him for ever as belonging to an inferior grade of human personality.

XX. This they will find, eventually, they must give up doing. They must not cease to condemn selfishness; but they will have to discover a kind of commerce which is not exclusively selfish. Or, rather, they will have to discover that there never was, or can be, any other kind of commerce; that this which they have called commerce was not commerce at all, but cozening; and that a true merchant differs as much from a merchant according to laws of modern political economy, as the hero of the *Excursion* from Autolycus. They will find that commerce is an occupation which gentlemen will every day see more need to engage in, rather than in the businesses of talking to men, or slaying them: that, in true commerce, as in true preaching, or true fighting, it is necessary to admit the idea of occasional voluntary loss; — that sixpences have to be lost, as well as lives, under a sense of duty; that the market may have its martyrdoms as well as the

pulpit; and trade its heroisms, as well as war.

May have — in the final issue, must have — and only has not had yet, because men of heroic temper have always been misguided in their youth into other fields, not recognizing what is in our days, perhaps, the most important of all fields; so that, while many a zealous person loses his life in trying to teach the form of a gospel, very few will lose a hundred pounds in showing the practice of one.

xxi. The fact is, that people never have had clearly explained to them the true functions of a merchant with respect to other people. I should like the reader to be very clear about this.

Five great intellectual professions, relating to daily necessities of life, have hitherto existed — three exist necessarily, in every civilized nation:

The Soldier's profession is to *defend* it.

The Pastor's to *teach* it.

The Physician's, to *keep it in health*.

The Lawyer's, to *enforce justice* in it.

The Merchant's, to *provide* for it.

And the duty of all these men is, on due occasion, to *die* for it.

"On due occasion," namely:

The Soldier, rather than leave his post in battle.

The Physician, rather than leave his post in plague.

The Pastor, rather than teach Falsehood.

The Lawyer, rather than countenance Injustice.

The Merchant — What is *his* "due occasion" of death?

xxii. It is the main question for the merchant, as for all of us. For, truly, the man who does not know when to die, does not know how to live.

Observe, the merchant's function (or manufacturer's, for in the broad sense in which it is here used the word must be understood to include both) is to provide for the nation. It is no more his function to get profit for himself out of that provision than it is a clergyman's function to get his stipend. The stipend is a due and necessary adjunct, but not the object, of his life, if he be a true clergyman, any more than his fee (or *honorarium*) is the object of life to a true physician. Neither is his fee the object of life to a true merchant. All three, if true men, have a work to be done irrespective of fee — to be done even at any cost, or for quite the contrary of fee; the pastor's function being to teach, the physician's to heal, and the mer-

chant's, as I have said, to provide. That is to say, he has to understand to their very root the qualities of the thing he deals in, and the means of obtaining or producing it; and he has to apply all his sagacity and energy to the producing or obtaining it in perfect state, and distributing it at the cheapest possible price where it is most needed.

And because the production or obtaining of any commodity involves necessarily the agency of many lives and hands, the merchant becomes in the course of his business the master and governor of large masses of men in a more direct, though less confessed way, than a military officer or pastor; so that on him falls, in great part, the responsibility for the kind of life they lead: and it becomes his duty, not only to be always considering how to produce what he sells in the purest and cheapest forms, but how to make the various employments involved in the production, or transference of it, most beneficial to the men employed.

xxiii. And as into these two functions, requiring for their right exercise the highest intelligence, as well as patience, kindness, and tact, the merchant is bound to put all his energy, so for their just discharge he is bound, as soldier or physician is bound, to give up, if need be, his life, in such way as it may be demanded of him. Two main points he has in his providing function to maintain: first, his engagements (faithfulness to engagements being the real root of all possibilities in commerce); and, secondly, the perfectness and purity of the thing provided; so that, rather than fail in any engagement, or consent to any deterioration, adulteration, or unjust and exorbitant price of that which he provides, he is bound to meet fearlessly any form of distress, poverty, or labor, which may, through maintenance of these points, come upon him.

xxiv. Again: in his office as governor of the men employed by him, the merchant or manufacturer is invested with a distinctly paternal authority and responsibility. In most cases, a youth entering a commercial establishment is withdrawn altogether from home influence; his master must become his father, else he has, for practical and constant help, no father at hand: in all cases the master's authority, together with the general tone and atmosphere of his business, and the character of the men with whom the youth is compelled in the course of it to associate, have more immediate and pressing weight than the home influence, and will usually

neutralize it either for good or evil; so that the only means which the master has of doing justice to the men employed by him is to ask himself sternly whether he is dealing with such subordinate as he would with his own son, if compelled by circumstances to take such a position.

Supposing the captain of a frigate saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of a common sailor; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of the men under him. So, also, supposing the master of a manufactory saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of an ordinary workman; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of his men. This is the only effective, true, or practical RULE which can be given on this point of political economy.

And as the captain of a ship is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of wreck, and to share his last crust with the sailors in case of famine, so the manufacturer, in any commercial crisis or distress, is bound to take the suffering of it with his men, and even to take more of it for himself than he allows his men to feel; as a father would in a famine, shipwreck, or battle, sacrifice himself for his son.

xxv. All which sounds very strange: the only real strangeness in the matter being, nevertheless, that it should so sound. For all this is true, and that not partially nor theoretically, but everlastingly and practically: all other doctrine than this respecting matters political being false in premises, absurd in deduction, and impossible in practice, consistently with any progressive state of national life; all the life which we now possess as a nation showing itself in the resolute denial and scorn, by a few strong minds and faithful hearts, of the economic principles taught to our multitudes, which principles, so far as accepted, lead straight to national destruction. Respecting the modes and forms of destruction to which they lead, and, on the other hand, respecting the farther practical working of true polity, I hope to reason further in a following paper.

FORS CLAVIGERA

1871

In 1871 Ruskin began a series of letters under this title which he explains as Fors, that is, Fate, Force, or Fortune bearing the Clavis,

that is, a club, a key, or a nail, which stand for power, patience, law. In Letter V he expounds his plan for a working Utopia within the realm of Queen Victoria, the Guild of Saint George. This may be regarded as an effort to put into practice the teaching of Carlyle in regard to work, sacrifice, and obedience. The *Fors Clavigera* papers continued to appear at intervals to the number of ninety-six. They contain careful accounts of the expenses of the Guild, which Ruskin met in large part out of his own fortune. They are the most characteristic expression of Ruskin's views on a wide range of subjects, all of them in harmony with the principle of the real and intrinsic as opposed to a scale of relative and conventional values.

LETTER 5

"For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of singing of birds is come.
Arise, O my fair one, my dove,
And come."

DENMARK HILL, 1st May, 1871

MY FRIENDS:

I. It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were likely little to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand.

I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words, — the saddest of them, perhaps, too well. But I have great fear that you may never come to understand these written above, which are a part of a king's love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone.

I fear that for you the wild winter's rain may never pass, — the flowers never appear on the earth; — that for you no bird may ever sing; — for you no perfect Love arise and fulfil your life in peace.

"And why not for us as for others?" Will you answer me so and take my fear for you as an insult?

Nay, it is no insult; — nor am I happier than you. For me the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you that you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

II. Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labor, and grieve, and be trodden down in dishonor all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honor of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country,

I Song of Solomon, II, 11-13.

and many an age, women have been compelled to labor for their husbands' wealth, or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan, "I have no husband." Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labor of fellowship: for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labor for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them; but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honor to be independent of you, and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race since they grew to be male and female out of starfish, or chickweed, or whatever else they have been made from by natural selection, — according to modern science.

III. That modern science, also, economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter, from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is over-production which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing, not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom: — as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

IV. And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration, just in time; — and it hap-

¹ Here is another curious instance, I have but a minute ago finished correcting these sheets, and take up the *Times* of this morning, April 21st, and find in it the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the removal or exemption from taxation of agricultural horses and carts, in the very nick of time to connect it, as a proposal for economic practice, with the statement of eco-

opened that, on the very day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum, and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which as yet in my whole life I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet on front of it, bearing this inscription:

Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with *pietra dura* fruits. — *English. Present Century.* No. I.

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it "I," the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness; and, indeed, such a punctual accent over the iota of Miscreation, — so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant, that I am not myself capable of conceiving a Number two, or three, or any rivalry or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observe, mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the persons who produced it had seen everything, and practiced everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied everything they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

V. But the second chance that came to me that day was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and "had learned so much." On hearing this, I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all, she had known more botany than she was likely to learn by them. So she told me that she had learned first of all that "there were seven sorts of

economic principle respecting production, quoted on last page. (Ruskin's note.)

leaves." Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven; because, when I wrote *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands. So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves; but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of Botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me she had no idea, before, that petals were leaves. On which, I thought to myself that it would not have been any great harm to her if she had remained under her old impression that petals were petals. But I said, "That was very pretty, too; and what more?" So then my friend told me that the lecturer said, "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower."¹ Now, in that sentence you have the most perfect and admirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if you feel yourself to be only a machine, constructed to be a Regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct,² and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating you.

VI. I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that saying of the Botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature, and would change into each other. Now this was a true discovery, and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts — the leaf and root — one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be

clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one which loves the light has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair forever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robcs, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey; and we call them "Flowers."

VII. In a certain sense, therefore, you see the Botanical lecturer was quite right. There are no such things as Flowers — there are only — gladdened Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy, but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily in its bloom; — which the great poets always knew, — well; — Chaucer, before Goethe; and the writer of the first Psalm before Chaucer. The Botanical lecturer was, in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the Botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf, and root, and fruit, exist, all of them, only — that there may be flowers. He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself, there is, in a plant, nothing else but its flowers.

Now in exactly the sense that modern science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidians and apes. It may, or may not be true — it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The real fact is, that, rightly seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; that all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of Light is in his eyes, — the centre of Force in his soul, — the pertinence of action in his deeds.

And all true science — which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not — all true science is *savoir vivre*.³

¹ In Letter 7 Ruskin said: "I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend; . . . but having some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong."

² The statue of Science was erected when the Viaduct was opened, 1869.

³ In Letter 4 Ruskin had told of a Savoyard guide, who, when "I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own, . . . would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered, 'Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre'" ("Poor child, he does not know how to live!")

But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is *savoir mourir*.¹

VIII. And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signalling was a discovery; and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one.

And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April (Cœur de Lion's death-day, and Albert Dürer's), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back.

But what was the message, and what the answer? Is India the better for what you said to her? Are you the better for what she replied? If not, you have only wasted an all-round-the-world's length of copper wire, — which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had, perchance, two words of common sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them; — though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals, and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one, — the two words of common sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that to say, either to India or to any other place.

IX. You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful. But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green, and blue, and all imaginable colors, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening — Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light — walking in fair procession on the lawns of it and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls "Railroad Enterprise." You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley — you blasted rocks

away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange — you Fools Everywhere.

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say, though you were ever so near; to go fast from this place to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other: these are powers certainly. Much more, power of increased Production, if you, indeed, had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it — that the mortal disease of plenty, and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

x. Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them; to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plough, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet, or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be so good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-ploughs to work on an acre, if you like — out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. They only increase the possibilities of idleness. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your plough driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a cream bowl, — (you have nearly managed to get it driven by an iron goblin, as it is); — well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if you had held the stilts yourself. But instead

¹ knowing how to die.

of holding them you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine; — watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

XI. Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. I can show you examples, millions of them, of happy people made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you, in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar, happier than these. Or bring me, — for I am not invincible by any kind of evidence, — bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *are* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil thought so, long ago, of simple rustics; but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress "in the light of a monstrous Sham." I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved ploughman sitting under his rose-bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before indeed, but I forget where. There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I think it was, a country festival such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people — their work all done for them by goblins — we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin to pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam-plough, and their steam-plough whistled to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia plough-boys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought;

whereas here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own whistling.

XII. But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hess's ² high-art frescoes; (which happened to be just above her, so that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the days of Minerva. You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five-hundred-fold tidier; tapestry should be increased into *cinque-cento-fold* ² iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

XIII. It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work — that other people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service; but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest, in the "position of William," ³ on ghostly self-going planes; but suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world — nay all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at? and what "useful things" you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost) knew what are useful things and what are

¹ Heinrich Marie von Hess (1798–1863), who painted the frescoes in the Hofkirche at Munich.

² Five-hundred-fold; perhaps with incidental allusion to the "*cinque-cento*" period of Italian art — the sixteenth century.

³ A reference to Letter 1: "James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December, lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege of lending it to him on that evening."

not. Very few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

xiv. There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one "knows how to live" till he has got them.

These are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.¹

Admiration — the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope — the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbor, faithful, and satisfied. These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy — the great "*savoir mourir*" — is doing with them.

xv. The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You, or your fellows, German and French, are at present vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction; chiefly at this moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war, changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven

of venomous smokes and smells, mixed with effluvia from decaying animal matter, and infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption; by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures; and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere, — is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

xvi. Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will, by planting wisely and tending carefully; — drought where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock; beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools; so full of fish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now, turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold its face out in the rain; and even *that* falls dirty.

xvii. Then for the third, Earth, meant to be nourishing for you and blossoming. You have learned, about it, that there is no such thing as a flower; and as far as your scientific hands and scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful, instead of blossoming and life-giving, Dust, can contrive, you have turned the Mother-Earth, Demeter,² into the Avenger Earth, Tisiphone — with the voice of your brother's blood crying out of it in one wild harmony round all its murderous sphere.

This is what you have done for the Three Material Useful Things.

xviii. Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For Admiration, you have learned contempt and conceit. There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. You gather, and exhibit together, as if equally instructive, what is infinitely bad with what is infinitely good. You do not know which is which; you instinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of it. You instinctively hate the Good, and destroy it.³

¹ Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book 4th; in Moxon's edition, 1857 (stupidly without numbers to lines) vol. vi, p. 135.

Love chief of the three spiritual needs, put last, as culminating, or crowning, because men must be capable of admiration and hope before they can be capable of love. Wordsworth's verse, "We live by admiration, hope, and love" is answered presently with the words in a reverse order — love, hope and admiration. (Ruskin's note.)

² Ruskin quotes a letter to the *Times* giving an account of the destruction of the gardens of Paris during the siege, 1870-71.

³ Last night (I am writing this on the 18th of April) I got a letter from Venice bringing me the, I believe, well grounded report the Venetians have requested permission from the government of Italy to pull down their Ducal

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay for ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you (either politicians or workmen) as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the Founder of your religion to love your neighbor as yourselves.

You have founded an entire Science of Political Economy on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man — the desire to defraud his neighbor.

And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love, nor for fellowship with you; but stand against you, and ask for "justice."

XIX. Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen?

Are there any landlords, — any masters, — who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils?

Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn, — not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with; and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

XX. I am not rich (as people now estimate riches), and great part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can (you shall see the accounts), I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day of this year, with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of such fund being to begin, and gradually — no matter how slowly — to increase the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be built upon, but cultivated

by Englishmen, with their own hands, and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave.

XXI. I do not care with how many, or how few, this thing is begun, nor on what inconsiderable scale, — if it be but in two or three poor men's gardens. So much, at least, I can buy, myself, and give them. If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions: We will try to make some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it; but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons; no equality upon it; but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or boats. We will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields, — and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it; — perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots; we, probably, cannot do as much, but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles; — butterflies, and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter in France who used to put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admiration of mankind; we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us; and feeble rays of science may dawn for us. Botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men; — nay, — even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom, as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.

Faithfully yours

JOHN RUSKIN

Palace and "rebuild it." Put up a horrible model of it, that is to say, for which their architects may charge a commission. Meantime, all their canals are choked with human dung, which they are too poor to cart away but throw out at their windows.

And all the great thirteenth-century cathedrals in France have been destroyed, within my own memory, only that architects might charge commission for putting up false models of them in their place. (Ruskin's note.)

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822-1888)

Matthew Arnold, critic and poet, was born at Laleham, December 24, 1822, six years before his father began his famous headmastership at Rugby. After private tutoring and a year at Winchester, he entered Rugby in 1837, leaving in 1841 for Balliol College, Oxford, on a scholarship. Here he formed a strong friendship for Clough, won the Newdigate prize with a poem on Cromwell, and graduated in 1845 with a second class. Shortly after his graduation he was made a fellow of Oriel College. In 1847 he became secretary to the Marquis of Lansdowne, who secured for him the position of inspector of schools in 1851. In the same year Arnold married Frances, daughter of Sir William Wightman.

Arnold had already published *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems* in 1848. The year after his marriage appeared *Empedocles on Etna*, and the next year, 1853, *Poems*, which contained the well-known *Sohrab and Rustum*, *Requiescat*, and *The Scholar-Gipsy*. In 1855 he published *Poems, Second Series*, and two years later accepted the professorship of Poetry at Oxford. During his ten years here he wrote *On Translating Homer*, 1861, *Essays in Criticism*, 1865, and *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, 1867. His later works include *Culture and Anarchy*, 1869, *Literature and Dogma*, 1875, *Discourses in America*, 1885 (the result of two lecture tours in the United States), and *Essays in Criticism, Second Series*, published in 1888, the year of his death.

Arnold's reputation as a poet is steadily increasing. The very qualities that the majority of the mid-Victorian public did not like, looking as they did for sentiment to cheer and comfort them in their wavering faith, make Arnold more popular to-day, when many of these doubts have either been removed or are being faced fairly. Sincerity, technical skill, honest lyrical reaction to his own joys and sorrows or those of his generation, a splendid balance of emotion and intellect, producing restraint and serenity — these are Arnold's characteristics as a poet.

Arnold, like Carlyle and Ruskin, felt constrained by the needs of his age to turn from literature to life. The *Function of Criticism at the Present Time* marks this change. His classical training gave him the keynote to a social doctrine in the principle of *totality* — the pursuit of total perfection which he described as culture. He reacted against the faith in sacrifice and work of Carlyle, as he did against the trust in material progress of Macaulay. Sacrifice and activity, which he identified as Hebraism, should be justified in the light of reason, which he identified with the Greek spirit or Hellenism. He protested against overemphasis upon any quality, however good in itself. He saw the beginning of the scientific movement, and realized that stress upon the values of knowing threatened to turn men's attention from equally important values of conduct and feeling. He therefore sought to defend Christianity and the traditional humanism embodied in classical education against the criticism of such exponents of the scientific spirit as Huxley.

Arnold's prose style is marked above all by urbanity, an ease and assurance which befits his position as a master of civilization. His humor is directed against those who are zealous beyond reason, and especially against those who are satisfied with faith in the catchwords of patriotism and mechanical progress, who, like Macaulay, rest in complacent admiration of the achievements of their own age. For them he adopted from Heine the term "Philistines," to which he gave popular currency.

Arnold's poems have been collected in the one volume Globe edition, published by Macmillan. Useful biographies are those by Paul, Saintsbury, and Garnett (in the *Dictionary of National Biography*). For a critical appreciation, see especially L. E. Gates, *Three Studies in Literature*.

* QUIET WORK

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee —
One lesson that in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties served in one,
Though the loud world proclaim their en-
mity —

Of toil unsevered from tranquillity:
Of labor, that in still advance outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on, 11

Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil,
Laborers that shall not fail, when man is
gone.

Pub. 1849.

SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask: thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea, s
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-
place,

Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams
know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honored, self-
secure, 10
Didst tread on earth unguessed at. — Better
so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which
bow,

Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Pub. 1849.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shorewards blow,
Now the salt tides seawards flow, 5
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go — 10
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain — 15
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay! 20
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town, 25
And the little grey church on the windy shore;
Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday 30
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep, 35
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,

Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground; 40
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye? 45
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me, 50
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it
well,

When down swung the sound of the far-off
bell.

She sighed, she looked up through the clear
green sea. 55

5 She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world — ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with
thee."

I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the
waves; 60

Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind
sea-caves."

She smiled, she went up through the surf in
the bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?

"The sea grows stormy, the little ones
moan. 65

20 Long prayers," I said, "in the world they
say;

Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf
in the bay.

We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-
walled town;

Through the narrow paved streets, where all
was still, 70

To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at
their prayers,

But we stood without in the cold blowing
airs.

We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn
with rains,

And we gazed up the aisle through the small
leaded panes. 75

She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:

"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!

Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
 But, ah, she gave me never a look, 80
 For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
 Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
 Come away, children, call no more!
 Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down! 85
 Down to the depths of the sea!
 She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
 Singing most joyfully.
 Hark, what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
 For the humming street, and the child with
 its toy! 90

For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
 For the wheel where I spun,
 And the blessed light of the sun!"
 And so she sings her fill,
 Singing most joyfully, 95
 Till the spindle falls from her hand,
 And the whizzing wheel stands still.
 She steals to the window, and looks at the
 sand,

And over the sand at the sea;
 And her eyes are set in a stare; 100
 And anon there breaks a sigh,
 And anon there drops a tear,
 From a sorrow-clouded eye,
 And a heart sorrow-laden,
 A long, long sigh; 105
 For the cold strange eyes of a little Mer-
 maiden
 And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children;
 Come children, come down!
 The hoarse wind blows colder; 110
 Lights shine in the town.
 She will start from her slumber
 When gusts shake the door;
 She will hear the winds howling,
 Will hear the waves roar. 115
 We shall see, while above us
 The waves roar and whirl,
 A ceiling of amber,
 A pavement of pearl.
 Singing, "Here came a mortal, 120
 But faithless was she!
 And alone dwell for ever
 The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
 When soft the winds blow, 125
 When clear falls the moonlight,
 When spring-tides are low;
 When sweet airs come seaward
 From heaths starred with broom,

And high rocks throw mildly 130
 On the blanched sands a gloom;
 Up the still, glistening beaches,
 Up the creeks we will hie,
 Over banks of bright seaweed
 The ebb-tide leaves dry. 135
 We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
 At the white, sleeping town;
 At the church on the hill-side —
 And then come back down.
 Singing, "There dwells a loved one, 140
 But cruel is she!
 She left lonely for ever
 The kings of the sea."

Pub. 1849.

EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

EMPEDOCLES' SONG, ACT I, SCENE 2

The music below ceases, and Empedocles speaks, accompanying himself in a solemn manner on his harp.

The outspread world to span
 A cord the Gods first slung,
 And then the soul of man
 There, like a mirror, hung,
 And bade the winds through space impel the
 gusty toy. 5

Hither and thither spins
 The wind-borne, mirroring soul,
 A thousand glimpses wins,
 And never sees a whole;
 Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and leaves
 its last employ. 10

The Gods laugh in their sleeve
 To watch man doubt and fear,
 Who knows not what to believe
 Where he sees nothing clear,
 And dares stamp nothing false where he finds
 nothing sure. 15

Is this, Pausanias,¹ so?
 And can our souls not strive,
 But with the winds must go,
 And hurry where they drive?
 Is Fate indeed so strong, man's strength in-
 deed so poor? 20

I will not judge. That man,
 Howbeit, I judge as lost,
 Whose mind allows a plan,
 Which would degrade it most;
 And he treats doubt the best who tries to see
 least ill. 25

¹ The physician in the play.

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!
 Thou art my friend; to thee,
 All knowledge that I have,
 All skill I wield, are free.

Ask not the latest news of the last miracle;
 30

Ask not what days and nights
 In trance Pantheia lay,
 But ask how thou such sights
 Mayst see without dismay;

Ask what most helps when known, thou son
 of Anchitus!
 35

What? hate, and awe, and shame
 Fill thee to see our time;
 Thou feelest thy soul's frame
 Shaken and out of chime?

What? life and time go hard with thee too,
 as with us;
 40

Thy citizens, 'tis said,
 Envy thee and oppress,
 Thy goodness no men aid,
 All strive to make it less;
 44
 Tyranny, pride, and lust fill Sicily's abodes;

Heaven is with earth at strife,
 Signs make thy soul afraid,
 The dead return to life,
 Rivers are dried, winds stayed:

Scarce can one think in calm, so threatening
 are the Gods;
 50

And we feel, day and night,
 The burden of ourselves —
 Well, then, the wiser wight
 In his own bosom delves,

And asks what ails him so, and gets what
 cure he can.
 55

The Sophist sneers: Fool, take
 Thy pleasure, right or wrong.
 The pious wail: Forsake
 A world these Sophists throng.

Be neither Saint nor Sophist led, but be a
 man!
 60

These hundred doctors try
 To preach thee to their school.
 We have the truth! they cry;
 And yet their oracle,

Trumpet it as they will, is but the same as
 thine.
 65

Once read thy own breast right,
 And thou hast done with fears;
 Man gets no other light,

Search he a thousand years.

Sink in thyself! there ask what ails thee, at
 that shrine!
 70

What makes thee struggle and rave?
 Why are men ill at ease? —

'Tis that the lot they have
 Fails their own will to please;

For man would make no murmuring, were his
 will obeyed.
 75

And why is it that still
 Man with his lot thus fights? —

'Tis that he makes this *will*

The measure of his *rights*,

And believes Nature outraged if his will's
 gainsaid.
 80

Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn
 How deep a fault is this;
 Couldst thou but once discern
 Thou hast no *right* to bliss,

No title from the Gods to welfare and re-
 pose;
 85

Then thou wouldst look less mazed
 Whene'er from bliss debarred,
 Nor think the Gods were crazed
 When thy own lot went hard.

But we are all the same — the fools of our
 own woes!
 90

For, from the first faint morn
 Of life, the thirst for bliss
 Deep in man's heart is born;
 And, sceptic as he is,

He fails not to judge clear if this is quenched
 or no.
 95

Nor is that thirst to blame.
 Man errs not that he deems
 His welfare his true aim;
 He errs because he dreams

The world does but exist that welfare to
 bestow.
 100

We mortals are no kings
 For each of whom to sway
 A new-made world up-springs,
 Meant merely for his play.

No, we are strangers here; the world is from
 of old.
 105

In vain our pent wills fret
 And would the world subdue.
 Limits we did not set
 Condition all we do.

Born into life we are, and life must be our
 mould.
 110

Born into life! — man grows
 Forth from his parents' stem,
 And blends their bloods, as those
 Of theirs are blent in them;
 So each new man strikes root into a far fore-
 time. 115

Born into life! — we bring
 A bias with us here,
 And, when here, each new thing
 Affects us we come near;
 To tunes we did not call our being must keep
 chime. 120

Born into life! — in vain,
 Opinions, those or these,
 Unaltered to retain
 The obstinate mind decrees;
 Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing
 in. 125

Born into life! — who lists
 May what is false hold dear,
 And for himself make mists
 Through which to see less clear;
 The world is what it is, for all our dust and
 din. 130

Born into life! — 'tis we,
 And not the world, are new;
 Our cry for bliss, our plea,
 Others have urged it too —
 Our wants have all been felt, our errors made
 before. 135

No eye could be too sound
 To observe a world so vast,
 No patience too profound
 To sort what's here amassed;
 How man may here best live no care too great
 to explore. 140

But we — as some rude guest
 Would change, where'er he roam,
 The manners there professed
 To those he brings from home —
 We mark not the world's course, but would
 have it take ours. 145

The world's course proves the terms
 On which man wins content;
 Reason the proof confirms —
 We spurn it, and invent
 A false course for the world, and for ourselves
 false powers. 150

Riches we wish to get,
 Yet remain spendthrifts still;

We would have health, and yet
 Still use our bodies ill;
 Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth to
 life's last scenes. 155

We would have inward peace,
 Yet will not look within;
 We would have misery cease,
 Yet will not cease from sin;
 We want all pleasant ends, but will use no
 harsh means; 160

We do not what we ought;
 What we ought not, we do;
 And lean upon the thought
 That chance will bring us through;
 But our own acts, for good or ill, are mightier
 powers. 165

Yet, even when man forsakes
 All sin, — is just, is pure,
 Abandons all that makes
 His welfare insecure, —
 Other existences there are, which clash with
 ours. 170

Like us, the lightning-fires
 Love to have scope and play;
 The stream, like us, desires
 An unimpeded way;
 Like us, the Libyan wind delights to roam at
 large. 175

Streams will not curb their pride
 The just man not to entomb,
 Nor lightnings go aside
 To leave his virtues room;
 Nor is that wind less rough that blows a good
 man's barge. 180

Nature, with equal mind,
 Sees all her sons at play,
 Sees man control the wind,
 The wind sweep man away;
 Allows the proudly-riding and the foundering
 bark. 185

And, lastly, though of ours
 No weakness spoil our lot,
 Though the non-human powers
 Of Nature harm us not,
 The ill deeds of other men make often our
 life dark. 190

What were the wise man's plan? —
 Through this sharp, toil-set life,
 To fight as best he can,

And win what's won by strife. —
But we an easier way to cheat our pains have
found. 195

Scratched by a fall, with moans,
As children of weak age
Lend life to the dumb stones
Whereon to vent their rage,
And bend their little fists, and rate the sense-
less ground; 200

So, loath to suffer mute,
We, peopling the void air,
Make Gods to whom to impute
The ills we ought to bear;
With God and Fate to rail at, suffering
easily. 205

Yet grant — as sense long missed
Things that are now perceived,
And much may still exist
Which is not yet believed —
Grant that the world were full of Gods we
cannot see; 210

All things the world which fill
Of but one stuff are spun,
That we who rail are still,
With what we rail at, one;
One with the o'er-labored Power that through
the breadth and length 215

Of earth, and air, and sea,
In men, and plants, and stones,
Hath toil perpetually,
And travails, pants, and moans;
Fain would do all things well, but sometimes
fails in strength. 220

And patiently exact
This universal God
Alike to any act
Proceeds at any nod,
And quietly declaims the cursings of him-
self. 225

This is not what man hates,
Yet he can curse but this.
Harsh Gods and hostile Fates
Are dreams! this only *is* —
Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the foolish
elf. 230

Nor only, in the intent
To attach blame elsewhere,
Do we at will invent
Stern Powers who make their care 234
To embitter human life, malignant Deities;

But, next, we would reverse
The scheme ourselves have spun,
And what we made to curse
We now would lean upon,
And feign kind Gods who perfect what man
vainly tries. 240

Look, the world tempts our eye,
And we would know it all!
We map the starry sky,
We mine this earthen ball,
We measure the sea-tides, we number the
sea-sands; 245

We scrutinize the dates
Of long-past human things,
The bounds of effaced states,
The lines of deceased kings;
We search out dead men's words, and works
of dead men's hands; 250

We shut our eyes, and muse
How our own minds are made,
What springs of thought they use,
How rightened, how betrayed —
And spend our wit to name what most em-
ploy unnamed. 255

But still, as we proceed,
The mass swells more and more
Of volumes yet to read,
Of secrets yet to explore.
Our hair grows grey, our eyes are dimmed,
our heat is tamed; 260

We rest our faculties,
And thus address the Gods:
"True Science if there is,
It stays in your abodes!
Man's measures cannot mete the immeasur-
able All. 265

"You only can take in
The world's immense design;
Our desperate search was sin,
Which henceforth we resign,
Sure only that your mind sees all things
which befall." 270

Fools! that in man's brief term
He cannot all things view,
Affords no ground to affirm
That there are Gods who do;
Nor does being weary prove that he has
where to rest. 275

Again. — Our youthful blood
Claims rapture as its right;

The world, a rolling flood
Of newness and delight,
Draws in the enamored gazer to its shining
breast; 280

Pleasure, to our hot grasp,
Gives flowers after flowers;
With passionate warmth we clasp
Hand after hand in ours;
Now do we soon perceive how fast our youth
is spent. 285

At once our eyes grow clear!
We see in blank dismay
Year posting after year,
Sense after sense decay;
Our shivering heart is mined by secret dis-
content; 290

Yet still, in spite of truth,
In spite of hopes entombed,
That longing of our youth
Burns ever unconsumed,
Still hungrier for delight as delights grow
more rare. 295

We pause; we hush our heart,
And then address the Gods:
"The world hath failed to impart
The joy our youth forbodes,
Failed to fill up the void which in our breasts
we bear. 300

"Changeful till now, we still
Looked on to something new;
Let us, with changeless will,
Henceforth look on to you,
To find with you the joy we in vain here
repute." 305

Fools! that so often here
Happiness mocked our prayer,
I think, might make us fear
A like event elsewhere;
Make us not fly to dreams, but moderate
desire. 310

And yet, for those who know
Themselves, who wisely take
Their way through life, and bow
To what they cannot break,
Why should I say that life need yield but
moderate bliss? 315

Shall we, with tempers spoiled,
Health sapped by living ill,
And judgments all embroiled

By sadness and self-will,
Shall *we* judge what for man is not true bliss
or is? 320

Is it so small a thing
To have enjoyed the sun,
To have lived light in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to have
done;
To have advanced true friends, and beat
down baffling foes — 325

That we must feign a bliss
Of doubtful future date,
And, while we dream on this,
Lose all our present state,
And relegate to worlds yet distant our
repose? 330

Not much, I know, you prize
What pleasures may be had,
Who look on life with eyes
Estranged, like mine, and sad;
And yet the village-churl feels the truth more
than you, 335

Who's loath to leave this life
Which to him little yields —
His hard-tasked sunburnt wife,
His often-labored fields,
The boors with whom he talked, the country-
spots he knew. 340

But thou, because thou hear'st
Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,
Because the Gods thou fear'st
Fail to make blest thy state,
Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust the joys
there are! 345

I say: Fear not! Life still
Leaves human effort scope.
But, since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope;
Because thou must not dream, thou need'st
not then despair! 350

Pub. 1852.

SELF-DEPENDENCE

Weary of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears
me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send: 5

"Ye who, from my childhood up, have calmed
me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye
waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew; 10
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of
heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer: 15
"Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without
them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy. 20

"And with joy the stars perform their shin-
ing,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful 25
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear: 30
"Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

Pub. 1852.

MORALITY

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire that in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed, 5
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done. 10
Not till the hours of light return,
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ask, how *she* viewed thy self-control, 15

Thy struggling, tasked morality —
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
Whose eyes thou wert afraid to seek, 20
See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek!
"Ah, child," she cries, "that strife divine,
Whence was it, for it is not mine?"

"There is no effort on *my* brow — 25
I do not strive, I do not weep;
I rush with the swift spheres and glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep. —
Yet that severe, that earnest air,
I saw, I felt it once — but where? 30

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod, 35
And lay upon the breast of God."

Pub. 1852.

THE BURIED LIFE

Light flows our war of mocking words, and
yet,
Behold, with tears my eyes are wet!
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
We know, we know that we can smile! 5
But there's a something in this breast,
To which thy light words bring no rest,
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
And turn those limpid eyes on mine, 10
And let me read there, love, thy inmost soul.

Alas, is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel? 15
I knew the mass of men concealed
Their thoughts, for fear that if revealed
They would by other men be met
With blank indifference, or with blame re-
proved;
I knew they lived and moved 20
Tricked in disguises, alien to the rest
Of men, and alien to themselves — and yet
The same heart beats in every human breast!

But we, my love! — does a like spell benumb
Our hearts, our voices? — must we too be
dumb? 25

Ah, well for us, if even we,
 Even for a moment, can get free
 Our heart, and have our lips unchained;
 For that which seals them hath been deep-
 ordained.

Fate, which foresaw 30
 How frivolous a baby man would be —
 By what distractions he would be possessed,
 How he would pour himself in every strife,
 And well-nigh change his own identity —
 That it might keep from his capricious play
 His genuine self, and force him to obey 36
 Even in his own despite his being's law,
 Bade through the deep recesses of our breast
 The unregarded river of our life
 Pursue with indiscernible flow its way; 40
 And that we should not see
 The buried stream, and seem to be
 Eddying about in blind uncertainty,
 Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded
 streets, 45

But often, in the dip of strife,
 There rises an unspeakable desire
 After the knowledge of our buried life;
 A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
 In tracking out our true, original course; 50
 A longing to inquire
 Into the mystery of this heart that beats
 So wild, so deep in us — to know
 Whence our lives come, and where they go.
 And many a man in his own breast 'then
 delves, 55

But deep enough, alas, none ever mines.
 And we have been on many thousand lines,
 And we have shown, on each, spirit and
 power;

But hardly have we, for one little hour,
 Been on our own line, have we been our-
 selves — 60

Hardly had skill to utter one of all
 The nameless feelings that course through
 our breast,

But they course on for ever unexpressed.
 And long we try in vain to speak and act
 Our hidden self, and what we say and do 65
 Is eloquent, is well — but 'tis not true!

And then we will no more be racked
 With inward striving, and demand
 Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
 Their stupefying power; 70

Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call!
 Yet still, from time to time, vague and for-
 lorn,

From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
 As from an infinitely distant land,

Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey
 A melancholy into all our day. 76

Only — but this is rare —
 When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
 When, jaded with the rush and glare
 Of the interminable hours, 80
 Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
 When our world-deafened ear
 Is by the tones of a loved voice caressed —
 A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,
 And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again. 85
 The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
 And what we mean, we say, and what we
 would, we know.

A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
 And hears its winding murmur; and he sees
 The meadows where it glides, the sun, the
 breeze. 90

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
 Wherein he doth for ever chase
 That flying and elusive shadow, rest.
 An air of coolness plays upon his face,
 And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
 And then he thinks he knows 96
 The hills where his life rose,
 And the sea where it goes.

Pub. 1852.

LINES WRITTEN IN KENSING- TON GARDENS

In this lone, open glade I lie,
 Screened by deep boughs on either hand;
 And at its end, to stay the eye,
 Those black-crowned, red-boled pine-trees
 stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his, 5
 Across the girdling city's hum.
 How green under the boughs it is!
 How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
 To take his nurse his broken toy; 10
 Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
 Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
 What endless, active life is here!
 What blowing daisies, fragrant grass! 15
 An air-stirred forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
 Where the tired angler lies, stretched out,
 And, eased of basket and of rod,
 Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout. 20

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
Be others happy if they can!
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurled, 25
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
When I who watch them am away, 30
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass, 35
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine, 40
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.

Pub. 1852.

THE FUTURE

A wanderer is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time.
Brimming with wonder and joy
He spreads out his arms to the light, 5
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts
been.

Whether he wakes,
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles, 10
Hems in its gorges the bed
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream.
Whether he first sees light
Where the river in gleaming rings
Sluggishly winds through the plain; 15
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea —
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream 20
Of the lands which the River of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,

Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts, 25
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough? 30
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then lived on her breast,
Her vigorous, primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear 35
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure? 40

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near, 45
As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time 50
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Bordered by cities, and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds 55
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we
see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge 60
In a blacker, incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead. 65
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed. 70

Haply, the river of Time,
As it grows, as the towns on its marge

Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream —
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

75

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with
foam

80

As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast —
As the pale waste widens around him —
As the banks fade dimmer away,
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

Pub. 1852.

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

5

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

10

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

15

Pub. 1853.

THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there, and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gipsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gipsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with

were not such impostors as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others: that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned. — Glanvil's *Vanity of Dogmatizing*; 1661. (Arnold's note.)

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their
throats,
Nor the cropped herbage shoot another
head.

5

But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to
rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes
seen

Cross and recross the strips of moon-
blanched green,

Come, shepherd; and again begin the
quest!

10

Here, where the reaper was at work of late,
In this high field's dark corner, where he
leaves

His coat, his basket, and his earthen
cruse,

And in the sun, all morning, binds the
sheaves,

Then here, at noon, comes back his
stores to use —

15

Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is
borne,

With distant cries of reapers in the
corn² —

All the live murmur of a summer's day.

20

Screened is this nook, o'er the high half-
reaped field,

And here till sun-down, shepherd! will I
be.

Through the thick corn the scarlet
poppies peep,

And round green roots and yellowing
stalks, I see

Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils creep;
And air-swept lindens yield

26

Their scent, and rustle down their per-
fumed showers

¹ Joseph Glanvil, 1636–80, Oxford graduate, clergy-
man, and writer on philosophical subjects.
² grain.

Of bloom on the bent grass where I am
laid,
And bower me from the August sun with
shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's
towers. 30

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's
book.

Come, let me read the oft-read tale again!
The story of the Oxford scholar poor,
Of shining parts and quick inventive
brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's
door, 35

One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-
lore,
And roamed the world with that wild
brotherhood,
And came, as most men deemed, to
little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no
more. 40

But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he
knew,
Met him, and of his way of life en-
quired;
Whereat he answered that the gipsy-crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they de-
sired 45
The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts
they will.
"And I," he said, "the secret of their
art,
When fully learned, will to the world im-
part;
But it needs Heaven-sent moments for
this skill." 50

This said, he left them, and returned no
more.

But rumors hung about the country-
side,

That the lost scholar long was seen to
stray,

Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-
tied,

In hat of antique shape, and cloak of
grey, 55

The same the gipsies wore.

Shepherds had met him on the Hurst¹ in
spring;

At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire
moors,
On the warm ingle-bench,² the smock-
froked boors
Had found him seated at their enter-
ing; 60

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would
fly. —

And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer! on
thy trace;

And boys who in lone wheatfields scare
the rooks,

I ask if thou hast passed their quiet
place; 65

Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer-
heats,

'Mid wide grass meadows which the
sunshine fills,

And watch the warm, green-muffled
Cumner hills,

And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy re-
treats. 70

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground:
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer-nights,
have met

Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-
hithe,²

Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers
wet, 75

As the punt's rope chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of
flowers

Plucked in shy fields and distant Wych-
wood³ bowers;

And thine eyes resting on the moonlit
stream. 80

And then they land, and thou art seen no
more! —

Maidens who from the distant hamlets
come

To dance around the Fyfield⁴ elm in
May,

Oft through the darkening fields have
seen thee roam,

Or cross a stile into the public way. 85
Oft thou hast given them store

Of flowers: the frail-leaved white anemony,

¹ A bench next to the fireside.

² A village one mile beyond Cumner Hurst from
Oxford.

³ A forest about ten miles north of Oxford.

⁴ About a mile south of Bablockhithe.

¹ Cumner Hurst, a wooded hill three miles south of
Oxford.

Dark bluebells drenched with dews of
summer eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves;
But none hath words she can report of
thee. 90

And, above Godstow Bridge,¹ when hay-
time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine
flames,
Men who through those wide fields of
breezy grass,
Where black-winged swallows haunt the
glittering Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher² pass,
Have often passed thee near, 96
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy
figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft ab-
stracted air:
But when they came from bathing, thou
wast gone! 100

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife
darns,
Thou hast been seen; or hanging on a
gate,
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes,
and late, 105
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee eying, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding
kine;
And marked thee, when the stars come
out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow
away. 110

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
(Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged
way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every
bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged, and shreds of
grey,
Above the forest-ground called Thes-
saly,) 115
The blackbird, picking food,
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at
all;
So often has he known thee past him
stray,

Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered
spray,
And waiting for the spark from heaven to
fall. 120

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill,
Where home through flooded fields foot-
travellers go,
Have I not passed thee on the wooden
bridge,
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the
snow,
Thy face toward Hinksey and its wintry
ridge? 125
And thou hast climbed the hill,
And gained the white brow of the Cum-
ner range;
Turned once to watch, while thick the
snowflakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church
hall;¹
Then sought thy straw in some sequestered
grange. 130

But what — I dream! Two hundred years
are flown,
Since first thy story ran through Oxford
halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale in-
scribe
That thou wert wandered from the studious
walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy-
tribe; 135
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard
laid:
Some country-nook, where o'er thy un-
known grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles
wave,
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's
shade. 140

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!
For what wears out the life of mortal
men?
'Tis that from change to change their
being rolls;
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers. 146
Till, having used our nerves with bliss and
teen,²
And tired upon a thousand schemes our
wit,

¹ This and other English places mentioned subse-
quently in the poem are all in the near vicinity of Oxford.
² A pool below a runway or race.

¹ The dining hall of Christ Church, Oxford.
² sadness.

- To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are — what we
have been. 150
- Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou
perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one*
desire;
Else wert thou long since numbered
with the dead,
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy
fire!
The generations of thy peers are fled, 155
And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's
page,
Because thou hadst what we, alas! have
not. 160
- For early didst thou leave the world, with
powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other
things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid
doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much
been baffled, brings. 165
O life unlike to ours!
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for
what he strives,
And each half-lives a hundred different
lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in
hope. 170
- Thou waitest for the spark from heaven!
and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in
deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been
fulfilled; 175
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments
new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-
day:
Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too? 180
- Yes, we await it! but it still delays,
And then we suffer! and amongst us, one¹
¹ The reference here can only be surmised.
- Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he 185
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and
signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was
fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and
how the head,
And all his hourly-varied anodynes. 190
- This for our wisest: and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would
end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to
bear,
With close-lipped patience for our only
friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbor to de-
spair. 195
But none has hope like thine!
Thou through the fields and through the
woods dost stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time
away. 200
- O born in days when wits were fresh and
clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames,
Before this strange disease of modern
life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts,
was rife — 205
Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering
wood!
Averse, as Dido did, with gesture stern,
From her false friend's¹ approach in
Hades turn,
Wave us away; and keep thy solitude! 210
- Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing
through,
By night, the silvered branches of the
glade,
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pur-
sue, 215
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge; and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
- ¹ Æneas, upon whose departure from Carthage Dido
killed herself.

With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales!

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly! 221
For strong the infection of our mental
strife,

Which, though it gives no bliss, yet
spoils for rest;

And we should win thee from thy own fair
life,

Like us distracted, and like us unblest.

Soon, soon thy cheer would die, 226

Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed
thy powers,

And thy clear aims be cross and shifting
made;

And then thy glad perennial youth
would fade,

Fade, and grow old at last, and die like
ours. 230

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and
smiles!

As some grave Tyrian¹ trader, from the
sea,

Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,

The fringes of a southward-facing
brow 235

Among the Ægæan isles;

And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes and Chian
wine,

Green bursting figs, and tunnies²
steeped in brine,

And knew the intruders on his ancient
home, 240

The young light-hearted masters of the
waves!

And snatched his rudder, and shook out
more sail:

And day and night held on³ indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the
gale,

Betwixt the Syrtes⁴ and soft Sicily, 245

To where the Atlantic raves

Outside the western straits; and unbent
sails

There, where down cloudy cliffs, through
sheets of foam,

Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians⁵ come;
And on the beach undid his corded
bales. 250

Pub. 1853.

¹ From Tyre, in Phœnicia.

² large mackerel.

³ Kept on under full sail.

⁴ Shallow gulf on north coast of Africa.

⁵ From the Spanish peninsula.

ISOLATION

TO MARGUERITE

This is the fourth in a series of seven poems
published under the heading *Switzerland*.

We were apart; yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be.
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee;
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew, 5
Like mine, each day, more tried, more true.

The fault was grave! I might have known,
What far too soon, alas! I learned —
The heart can bind itself alone,
And faith may oft be unreturned. 10
Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell —
Thou lov'st no more; — Farewell! Fare-
well!

Farewell! — and thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart 15
From thy remote and spheréd course
To haunt the place where passions reign —
Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer night, 20
Flash through her pure immortal frame,
When she forsook the starry height
To hang over Endymion's sleep
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved 25
How vain a thing is mortal love,
Wandering in heaven, far removed;
But thou hast long had place to prove
This truth — to prove, and make thine
own:

"Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone." 30

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
Which touch thee are unmating things —
Ocean and clouds and night and day;
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;
And life, and others' joy and pain, 35
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men — for they, at least,
Have dreamed two human hearts might
blend

In one, and were through faith released
From isolation without end 40
Prolonged; nor knew, although not less
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

Pub. 1857.

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair
 Upon the straits; on the French coast the
 light
 Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England
 stand,
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil
 bay.
 Come to the window, sweet as the night-air!
 Only, from the long line of spray
 Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd
 sand,
 Listen! you hear the grating roar
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and
 fling,
 At their return, up the high strand,
 Begin, and cease; and then again begin,
 With tremulous cadence slow; and bring
 The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles, long ago,
 Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
 Of human misery; we
 Find also in the sound a thought,
 Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's
 shore
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;
 But now I only hear
 Its melancholy long withdrawing roar,
 Retreating, to the breath
 Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
 And naked shingles¹ of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
 To one another! for the world, which seems
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,
 So various, so beautiful, so new,
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
 And we are here as on a darkling plain,
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and
 flight,
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Pub. 1867.

RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER, 1857

Coldly, sadly descends
 The autumn-evening. The field
 Strewn with its dank yellow drifts

1 beaches.

Of withered leaves, and the elms,
 Fade into dimness apace,
 Silent; — hardly a shout
 From a few boys late at their play!
 The lights come out in the street,
 In the school-room windows; — but cold,
 Solemn, unlighted, austere,
 Through the gathering darkness, arise
 The chapel-walls, in whose bound
 Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
 Of the autumn evening. But ah!
 That word, *gloom*, to my mind
 Brings thee back, in the light
 Of thy radiant vigor again;
 In the gloom of November we passed
 Days not dark at thy side;
 Seasons impaired not the ray
 Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.
 Such thou wast! and I stand
 In the autumn evening, and think
 Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round
 Since thou arodest to tread,
 In the summer-morning, the road
 Of death, at a call unforeseen,
 Sudden. For fifteen years,
 We who till then in thy shade
 Rested as under the boughs
 Of a mighty oak, have endured
 Sunshine and rain as we might,
 Bare, unshaded, alone,
 Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore
 Tarriest thou now? For that force,
 Surely, has not been left in vain!
 Somewhere, surely, afar,
 In the sounding labor-house vast
 Of being, is practised that strength,
 Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
 Conscious or not of the past,
 Still thou performest the word
 Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live —
 Prompt, unwearied, as here!
 Still thou upraiest with zeal
 The humble good from the ground,
 Sternly represses the bad!
 Still, like a trumpet, doth rouse
 Those who with half-open eyes
 Tread the border-land dim
 'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,

1 Dr. Thomas Arnold, 1795–1842, famous headmaster of Rugby.

Succorest! — this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth?
Most men eddy about
Here and there — eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die —
Perish; — and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
Foamed for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent,
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeless dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes! some of us strive
Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave!
We, we have chosen our path —
Path to a clear-purposed goal,
Path of advance! — but it leads
A long, steep journey, through sunk
Gorges, o'er the mountains in snow.
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth —
Then, on the height, comes the storm. 90
Thunder crashes from rock
To rock, the cataracts reply,
Lightnings dazzle our eyes.
Roaring torrents have breached
The track, the stream-bed descends 95
In the place where the wayfarer once
Planted his footstep — the spray
Boils o'er its borders! aloft
The unseen snow-beds dislodge
Their hanging ruin; alas, 100
Havoc is made in our train!
Friends, who set forth at our side,
Falter, are lost in the storm.
We, we only are left!
With frowning foreheads, with lips
Sternly compressed, we strain on,
On — and at nightfall at last
Come to the end of our way,
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;
Where the gaunt and taciturn host
Stands on the threshold, the wind 110

Shaking his thin white hairs —
Holds his lantern to scan
Our storm-beat figures, and asks:
Whom in our party we bring? 115
Whom we have left in the snow?

Sadly we answer: We bring
Only ourselves! we lost
Sight of the rest in the storm.
Hardly ourselves we fought through, 120
Stripped, without friends, as we are.
Friends, companions, and train,
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*
Be saved, my father! *alone* 125
Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.
We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we in our march
Fain to drop down and to die. 130
Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand.
If, in the paths of the world,
Stones might have wounded thy feet, 135
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing — to us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful and firm!
Therefore to thee it was given 140
Many to save with thyself;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd! to come,
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

And through thee I believe 145
In the noble and great who are gone;
Pure souls honored and blest
By former ages, who else —
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see — 150
Seemed but a dream of the heart,
Seemed but a cry of desire.
Yes! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd 155
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile;
But souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good, 160
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God! — or sons
Shall I not call you? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind, 165
His, who unwillingly sees

One of his little ones lost —
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

170

See! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending? — A God
Marshaled them, gave them their goal. 175
Ah, but the way is so long!
Years they have been in the wild!
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe;
Factions divide them, their host 180
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
— Ah, keep, keep them combined!
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive;
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks 185
Stagger for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear, 190
Radiant with ardor divine!
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow. 195
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave! 200
Order, courage, return.
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line, 205
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God.

Pub. 1867.

PREFACE TO ESSAYS IN CRITICISM

(FIRST SERIES)

1865

Arnold's most famous piece of prose. It illustrates fully his urbanity and his playfulness; and has, moreover, a higher quality of eloquence than his reserve usually permitted.

Several of the Essays which are here collected and reprinted had the good or the bad

fortune to be much criticized at the time of their first appearance. I am not now going to inflict upon the reader a reply to those criticisms; for one or two explanations which are desirable, I shall elsewhere, perhaps, be able some day to find an opportunity; but, indeed, it is not in my nature, — some of my critics would rather say, not in my power, — to dispute on behalf of any opinion, even my own, very obstinately. To try and approach truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, nor to persist in pressing forward, on any one side, with violence and self-will, — it is only thus, it seems to me, that mortals may hope to gain any vision of the mysterious Goddess, whom we shall never see except in outline, but only thus even in outline. He who will do nothing but fight impetuously towards her on his own, one, favorite, particular line, is inevitably destined to run his head into the folds of the black robe in which she is wrapped.

So it is not to reply to my critics that I write this Preface, but to prevent a misunderstanding, of which certain phrases that some of them use make me apprehensive. Mr. Wright, one of the many translators of Homer, has published a letter to the Dean of Canterbury, complaining of some remarks of mine, uttered now a long while ago, on his version of the *Iliad*.¹ One cannot be always studying one's own works, and I was really under the impression, till I saw Mr. Wright's complaint, that I had spoken of him with all respect. The reader may judge of my astonishment, therefore, at finding, from Mr. Wright's pamphlet, that I had "declared with much solemnity that there is not any proper reason for his existing." That I never said; but, on looking back at my Lectures on Translating Homer, I find that I did say, not that Mr. Wright, but that Mr. Wright's version of the *Iliad*, repeating in the main the merits and defects of Cowper's version, as Mr. Sotheby's repeated those of Pope's version, had, if I might be pardoned for saying so, no proper reason for existing. Elsewhere I expressly spoke of the merit of his version; but I confess that the phrase, qualified as I have shown, about its want of a proper reason for existing, I used. Well, the phrase had, perhaps, too much vivacity; we have all of us a right to exist, we and our works; an unpopular author should be the last person to call in question this right. So I gladly withdraw the offending phrase, and I am sorry for having used it; Mr. Wright, however, would

1 In Arnold's *Lectures On Translating Homer*.

perhaps be more indulgent to my vivacity, if he considered that we are none of us likely to be lively much longer. My vivacity is but the last sparkle of flame before we are all in the dark, the last glimpse of color before we all go into drab, — the drab of the earnest, prosaic, practical, austere, literally future. Yes, the world will soon be the Philistines'! and then, with every voice, not of thunder, silenced, and the whole earth filled and ennobled every morning by the magnificent roaring of the young lions of the *Daily Telegraph*, we shall all yawn in one another's faces with the dismalest, the most unimpeachable gravity.

But I return to my design in writing this Preface. That design was, after apologizing to Mr. Wright for my vivacity of five years ago, to beg him and others to let me bear my own burdens, without saddling the great and famous University to which I have the honor to belong with any portion of them. What I mean to deprecate is such phrases as, "his professorial assault," "his assertions issued *ex cathedra*,"¹ "the sanction of his name as the representative of poetry," and so on. Proud as I am of my connection with the University of Oxford,² I can truly say that, knowing how unpopular a task one is undertaking when one tries to pull out a few more stops in that powerful but at present somewhat narrow-toned organ, the modern Englishman, I have sought always to stand by myself, and to compromise others as little as possible. Besides this, my native modesty is such that I have always been shy of assuming the honorable style of Professor, because this is a title I share with so many distinguished men, — Professor Pepper, Professor Anderson, Professor Frickel, and others, — who adorn it, I feel, much more than I do.

However, it is not merely out of modesty that I prefer to stand alone, and to concentrate on myself, as a plain citizen of the republic of letters, and not as an office-bearer in a hierarchy, the whole responsibility for all I write; it is much more out of genuine devotion to the University of Oxford, for which I feel, and always must feel, the fondest, the most reverential attachment. In an epoch of dissolution and transformation, such as that on which we are now entered, habits, ties, and associations are inevitably broken up, the action of individuals becomes more distinct, the shortcomings, errors, heats,

disputes, which necessarily attend individual action, are brought into greater prominence. Who would not gladly keep clear, from all these passing clouds, an august institution which was there before they arose, and which will be there when they have blown over?

It is true, the *Saturday Review* maintains that our epoch of transformation is finished; that we have found our philosophy; that the British nation has searched all anchorages for the spirit, and has finally anchored itself, in the fulness of perfected knowledge, on Benthamism.¹ This idea at first made a great impression on me; not only because it is so consoling in itself, but also because it explained a phenomenon which in the summer of last year had, I confess, a good deal troubled me. At that time my avocations led me to travel almost daily on one of the Great Eastern Lines, — the Woodford Branch. Every one knows that the murderer, Müller, perpetrated his detestable act on the North London Railway, close by. The English middle class, of which I am myself a feeble unit, travel on the Woodford Branch in large numbers. Well, the demoralization of our class, — the class which (the newspapers are constantly saying it, so I may repeat it without vanity) has done all the great things which have ever been done in England, — the demoralization, I say, of our class, caused by the Bow tragedy, was something bewildering. Myself a transcendentalist (as the *Saturday Review* knows), I escaped the infection; and, day after day, I used to ply my agitated fellow-travellers with all the consolations which my transcendentalism would naturally suggest to me. I reminded them how Cæsar refused to take precautions against assassination, because life was not worth having at the price of an ignoble solicitude for it. I reminded them what insignificant atoms we all are in the life of the world. "Suppose the worst to happen," I said, addressing a portly jeweller from Cheapside; "suppose even yourself to be the victim; *il n'y a pas d'homme nécessaire*."² We should miss you for a day or two upon the Woodford Branch; but the great mundane movement would still go on, the gravel walks of your villa would still be rolled, dividends would still be paid at the Bank, omnibuses would still run, there would still be the old crush at the corner of Fenchurch Street." All was of no avail. Nothing could moderate, in the bosom of the great English middle class, their

¹ from his official seat.

² When the above was written the author had still the Chair of Poetry at Oxford, which he has since vacated. (Arnold's note.)

¹ The utilitarianism of the school of Jeremy Bentham.

² No man is necessary.

passionate, absorbing, almost bloodthirsty clinging to life. At the moment I thought this over—concern a little unworthy; but the *Saturday Review* suggests a touching explanation of it. What I took for the ignoble clinging to life of a comfortable worldling, was, perhaps, only the ardent longing of a faithful Benthamite, traversing an age still dimmed by the last mists of transcendentalism, to be spared long enough to see his religion in the full and final blaze of its triumph. This respectable man, whom I imagined to be going up to London to serve his shop, or to buy shares, or to attend an Exeter Hall meeting, or to assist at the deliberations of the Marylebone Vestry, was even, perhaps, in real truth, on a pious pilgrimage, to obtain from Mr. Bentham's executors a secret bone of his great, dissected master.¹

And yet, after all, I cannot but think that the *Saturday Review* has here, for once, fallen a victim to an idea, — a beautiful but deluding idea, — and that the British nation has not yet, so entirely as the reviewer seems to imagine, found the last word of its philosophy. No, we are all seekers still! seekers often make mistakes, and I wish mine to redound to my own discredit only, and not to touch Oxford. Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged, by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!

"There are our young barbarians, all at play!"

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection, — to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? — nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen. Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who hast given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistines! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! what example could ever so inspire us to keep down the Philistine in ourselves, what teacher could ever so save us from that bondage to which we are all prone, that bondage which Goethe, in his incomparable lines on the death of Schiller, makes it his friend's highest praise (and nobly did Schiller deserve the praise) to have left miles out of

sight behind him; — the bondage of "*was uns alle bändigt, das Gemeine!*"² She will forgive me, even if I have unwittingly drawn upon her a shot or two aimed at her unworthy son; for she is generous, and the cause in which I fight is, after all, hers. Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against the Philistines, compared with the warfare which this queen of romance has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone?

THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM AT THE PRESENT TIME

1865

The opening essay in *Essays in Criticism, First Series*. Here Arnold sets forth his principle of criticism, applied to life as well as literature. It will be seen that Arnold protests not only against the selfishness and complacent materialism of his countrymen, but against their sectarian narrowness. His remedy is a more intellectual one than Carlyle's — i.e., the application of ideas to life.

Many objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth; a proposition about criticism, and its importance at the present day. I said that "of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort; the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." I added, that owing to the operation in English literature of certain causes, "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires; — criticism"; and that the power and value of English literature was thereby impaired. More than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort. And the other day, having been led by an excellent notice of Wordsworth, published in the *North British Review*, to turn again to his biography, I found, in the words of this great man, whom I, for one, must always listen to with the profoundest respect, a sentence passed on the critic's business, which seems to justify every possible disparagement of it. Wordsworth says in one of his letters:

¹ Bentham's skeleton is preserved at University College, Oxford.

² That which constrains us all, the commonplace.

"The writers in these publications" (the Reviews), "while they prosecute their inglorious employment, cannot be supposed to be in a state of mind very favorable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine poetry."

And a trustworthy reporter of his conversation quotes a more elaborate judgment to the same effect:

"Wordsworth holds the critical power very low, infinitely lower than the inventive; and he said to-day that if the quantity of time consumed in writing critiques on the works of others were given to original composition, of whatever kind it might be, it would be much better employed; it would make a man find out sooner his own level, and it would do infinitely less mischief. A false or malicious criticism may do much injury to the minds of others; a stupid invention, either in prose or verse, is quite harmless."

It is almost too much to expect of poor human nature, that a man capable of producing some effect in one line of literature, should, for the greater good of society, voluntarily doom himself to impotence and obscurity in another. Still less is this to be expected from men addicted to the composition of the "false or malicious criticism" of which Wordsworth speaks. However, everybody would admit that a false or malicious criticism had better never have been written. Everybody, too, would be willing to admit, as a general proposition, that the critical faculty is lower than the inventive. But is it true that criticism is really, in itself, a baneful and injurious employment? is it true that all time given to writing critiques on the works of others would be much better employed if it were given to original composition, of whatever kind this may be? Is it true that Johnson had better have gone on producing more *Irenes* instead of writing his *Lives of the Poets*? nay, is it certain that Wordsworth himself was better employed in making his Ecclesiastical Sonnets than when he made his celebrated Preface, so full of criticism, and criticism of the works of others? Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism. Without wasting time over the exaggeration which Wordsworth's judgment on criticism clearly contains, or over an attempt to trace the causes, — not difficult, I think, to be traced, — which may have led

Wordsworth to this exaggeration, a critic may with advantage seize an occasion for trying his own conscience, and for asking himself of what real service, at any given moment, the practice of criticism either is, or may be made, to his own mind and spirit, and to the minds and spirits of others.

The critical power is of lower rank than the creative. True; but in assenting to this proposition, one or two things are to be kept in mind. It is undeniable that the exercise of a creative power, that a free creative activity, is the true function of man; it is proved to be so by man's finding in it his true happiness. But it is undeniable, also, that men may have the sense of exercising this free creative activity in other ways than in producing great works of literature or art; if it were not so, all but a very few men would be shut out from the true happiness of all men. They may have it in well-doing, they may have it in learning, they may have it even in criticizing. This is one thing to be kept in mind. Another is, that the exercise of the creative power in the production of great works of literature or art, however high this exercise of it may rank, is not at all epochs and under all conditions possible; and that therefore labor may be vainly spent in attempting it, which might with more fruit be used in preparing for it, in rendering it possible. This creative power works with elements, with materials; what if it has not those materials, those elements, ready for its use? In that case it must surely wait till they are ready. Now, in literature, — I will limit myself to literature, for it is about literature that the question arises, — the elements with which the creative power works are ideas; the best ideas on every matter which literature touches, current at the time. At any rate we may lay it down as certain that in modern literature no manifestation of the creative power not working with these can be very important or fruitful. And I say *current* at the time, not merely accessible at the time; for creative literary genius does not principally show itself in discovering new ideas, that is rather the business of the philosopher. The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations, making beautiful

works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is why great creative epochs in literature are so rare; this is why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the productions of many men of real genius; because, for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control.

Nay, they are more within the control of the critical power. It is the business of the critical power, as I said in the words already quoted, "in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." Thus it tends, at last, to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself. It tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society, the touch of truth is the touch of life, and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature.

Or, to narrow our range, and quit these considerations of the general march of genius and of society, — considerations which are apt to become too abstract and impalpable, — every one can see that a poet, for instance, ought to know life and the world before dealing with them in poetry; and life and the world being in modern times very complex things, the creation of a modern poet, to be worth much, implies a great critical effort behind it; else it would be a comparatively poor, barren, and short-lived affair. This is why Byron's poetry had so little endurance in it, and Goethe's so much; both Byron and Goethe had a great productive power, but Goethe's was nourished by a great critical effort providing the true materials for it, and Byron's was not; Goethe knew life and the world, the poet's necessary subjects, much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron. He knew a great deal more of them, and he knew them much more as they really are.

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of this century, had about it in fact something premature; and that from this cause its productions are doomed, most

of them, in spite of the sanguine hopes which accompanied and do still accompany them, to prove hardly more lasting than the productions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematureness comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety. Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, to suppose that he could have been different. But surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is, — his thought richer, and his influence of wider application, — was that he should have read more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading him.

But to speak of books and reading may easily lead to a misunderstanding here. It was not really books and reading that lacked to our poetry at this epoch; Shelley had plenty of reading, Coleridge had immense reading. Pindar and Sophocles — as we all say so glibly, and often with so little discernment of the real import of what we are saying — had not many books; Shakespeare was no deep reader. True; but in the Greece of Pindar and Sophocles, in the England of Shakespeare, the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power; society was, in the fullest measure, permeated by fresh thought, intelligent and alive. And this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise, in this it finds its data, its materials, truly ready for its hand; all the books and reading in the world are only valuable as they are helps to this. Even when this does not actually exist, books and reading may enable a man to construct a kind of semblance of it in his own mind, a world of knowledge and intelligence in which he may live and work. This is by no means an equivalent to the artist for the nationally diffused life and thought of the epochs of Sophocles or Shakespeare; but, besides that it may be a means of preparation for such epochs, it does really constitute, if many share in it, a quickening and sustaining atmosphere of great

value. Such an atmosphere the many-sided learning and the long and widely-combined critical effort of Germany formed for Goethe, when he lived and worked. There was no national glow of life and thought there, as in the Athens of Pericles or the England of Elizabeth. That was the poet's weakness. But there was a sort of equivalent for it in the complete culture and unfettered thinking of a large body of Germans. That was his strength. In the England of the first quarter of this century there was neither a national glow of life and thought, such as we had in the age of Elizabeth, nor yet a culture and a force of learning and criticism such as were to be found in Germany. Therefore the creative power of poetry wanted, for success in the highest sense, materials and a basis; a thorough interpretation of the world was necessarily denied to it.

At first sight it seems strange that out of the immense stir of the French Revolution and its age should not have come a crop of works of genius equal to that which came out of the stir of the great productive time of Greece, or out of that of the Renaissance, with its powerful episode the Reformation. But the truth is that the stir of the French Revolution took a character which essentially distinguished it from such movements as these. These were, in the main, disinterestedly intellectual and spiritual movements; movements in which the human spirit looked for its satisfaction in itself and in the increased play of its own activity. The French Revolution took a political, practical character. The movement which went on in France under the old régime, from 1700 to 1789, was far more really akin than that of the Revolution itself to the movement of the Renaissance; the France of Voltaire and Rousseau told far more powerfully upon the mind of Europe than the France of the Revolution. Goethe reproached this last expressly with having "thrown quiet culture back." Nay, and the true key to how much in our Byron, even in our Wordsworth, is this! — that they had their source in a great movement of feeling, not in a great movement of mind. The French Revolution, however, that object of so much blind love and so much blind hatred, — found undoubtedly its motive-power in the intelligence of men, and not in their practical sense; — this is what distinguishes it from the English Revolution of Charles the First's time. This is what makes it a more spiritual event than our Revolution, an event of much more powerful and world-wide interest,

though practically less successful — it appeals to an order of ideas which are universal, certain, permanent. 1789 asked of a thing, Is it rational? 1642 asked of a thing, Is it legal? or, when it went furthest, Is it according to conscience? This is the English fashion, a fashion to be treated, within its own sphere, with the highest respect; for its success, within its own sphere, has been prodigious. But what is law in one place is not law in another; what is law here to-day is not law even here to-morrow; and as for conscience, what is binding on one man's conscience is not binding on another's. The old woman¹ who threw her stool at the head of the surpliced minister in the Tron Church at Edinburgh obeyed an impulse to which millions of the human race may be permitted to remain strangers. But the prescriptions of reason are absolute, unchanging, of universal validity; *to count by tens is the easiest way of counting* — that is a proposition of which every one, from here to the Antipodes, feels the force; at least I should say so if we did not live in a country where it is not impossible that any morning we may find a letter in the *Times* declaring that a decimal coinage is an absurdity. That a whole nation should have been penetrated with an enthusiasm for pure reason, and with an ardent zeal for making its prescriptions triumph, is a very remarkable thing, when we consider how little of mind or anything so worthy and quickening as mind, comes into the motives which alone, in general, impel great masses of men. In spite of the extravagant direction given to this enthusiasm, in spite of the crimes and follies in which it lost itself, the French Revolution derives from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas, a unique and still living power; it is — it will probably long remain — the greatest, the most animating event in history. And as no sincere passion for the things of the mind, even though it turn out in many respects an unfortunate passion, is ever quite thrown away and quite barren of good, France has reaped from hers one fruit, — the natural and legitimate fruit, though not precisely the grand fruit she expected: she is the country in Europe where *the people* is most alive.

But the mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these

¹ Janet Geddes, who gave the signal for the resistance of the Scotch to the imposition of the English liturgy under Charles I, in 1637.

fine ideas of the reason was fatal. Here an Englishman is in his element: on this theme we can all go for hours. And all we are in the habit of saying on it has undoubtedly a great deal of truth. Ideas cannot be too much prized in and for themselves, cannot be too much lived with; but to transport them abruptly into the world of politics and practice, violently to revolutionize this world to their bidding, — that is quite another thing. There is the world of ideas and there is the world of practice; the French are often for suppressing the one and the English the other; but neither is to be suppressed. A member of the House of Commons said to me the other day: "That a thing is an anomaly, I consider to be no objection to it whatever." I venture to think he was wrong; that a thing is an anomaly *is* an objection to it, but absolutely and in the sphere of ideas: it is not necessarily, under such and such circumstances, or at such and such a moment, an objection to it in the sphere of politics and practice. Joubert¹ has said beautifully: "C'est la force et le droit qui règlent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit." Force and right are the governors of this world; force till right is ready. *Force till right is ready*; and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral, and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right, — *right*, so far as we are concerned, *is not ready*, — until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it. The way in which for us it may change and transform force, the existing order of things, and become, in its turn, the legitimate ruler of the world, will depend on the way in which, when our time comes, we see it and will it. Therefore for other people enamored of their own newly discerned right, to attempt to impose it upon us as ours, and violently to substitute their right for our force, is an act of tyranny, and to be resisted. It sets at nought the second great half of our maxim, *force till right is ready*. This was the grand error of the French Revolution; and its movement of ideas, by quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere, ran, indeed, a prodigious and memorable course, but produced no such intellectual fruit as the movement of ideas of the Renaissance, and created, in opposition to itself, what I may call an *epoch of concentration*.

¹ A French writer (1754-1824) of whom Arnold wrote in one of the *Essays in Criticism*.

The great force of that epoch of concentration was England; and the great voice of that epoch of concentration was Burke. It is the fashion to treat Burke's writings on the French Revolution as superannuated and conquered by the event; as the eloquent but unphilosophical tirades of bigotry and prejudice. I will not deny that they are often disfigured by the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded, and his observation therefore at fault. But on the whole, and for those who can make the needful corrections, what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth. They contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration, dissipate the heavy atmosphere which its own nature is apt to engender round it, and make its resistance rational instead of mechanical.

But Burke is so great because, almost alone in England, he brings thought to bear upon politics, he saturates politics with thought. It is his accident that his ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not of an epoch of expansion; it is his characteristic that he so lived by ideas, and had such a source of them welling up within him, that he could float even an epoch of concentration and English Tory politics with them. It does not hurt him that Dr. Price and the Liberals were displeased with him; it does not even hurt him that George the Third and the Tories were enchanted with him. His greatness is that he lived in a world which neither English Liberalism nor English Toryism is apt to enter; — the world of ideas, not the world of catchwords and party habits. So far is it from being really true of him that he "to party gave up what was meant for mankind," that at the very end of his fierce struggle with the French Revolution, after all his invectives against its false pretensions, hollowness, and madness, with his sincere conviction of its mischievousness, he can close a memorandum on the best means of combating it, some of the last pages he ever wrote, — the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in December 1791, — with these striking words: —

"The evil is stated, in my opinion, as it exists. The remedy must be where power, wisdom, and information, I hope, are more united with good intentions than they can be with me. I have done with this subject, I believe, for ever. It has given me many anxious moments for the last two years. *If a great*

change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men. They will not be resolute and firm, but perverse and obstinate."

That return of Burke upon himself has always seemed to me one of the finest things in English literature, or indeed in any literature. That is what I call living by ideas: when one side of a question has long had your earnest support, when all your feelings are engaged, when you hear all round you no language but one, when your party talks this language like a steam-engine and can imagine no other, — still to be able to think, still to be irresistibly carried, if so it be, by the current of thought to the opposite side of the question, and, like Balaam, to be unable to speak anything but what the Lord has put in your mouth. I know nothing more striking, and I must add that I know nothing more un-English.

For the Englishman in general is like my friend the Member of Parliament, and believes, point-blank, that for a thing to be an anomaly is absolutely no objection to it whatever. He is like the Lord Auckland of Burke's day, who, in a memorandum on the French Revolution, talks, of "certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, who have presumed themselves capable of establishing a new system of society." The Englishman has been called a political animal, and he values what is political and practical so much that ideas easily become objects of dislike in his eyes, and thinkers "miscreants," because ideas and thinkers have rashly meddled with politics and practice. This would be all very well if the dislike and neglect confined themselves to ideas transported out of their own sphere, and meddling rashly with practice; but they are inevitably extended to ideas as such, and to the whole life of intelligence; practice is everything, a free play of the mind is nothing. The notion of the free play of the mind upon all subjects being a pleasure in itself, being an object of desire, being an essential provider of elements without which a nation's spirit, whatever compensations it may have for them, must, in the long run, die of inanition, hardly enters into an Englishman's thoughts. It is noticeable that the word *curiosity*, which in other languages is used in a good sense, to mean, as a high and fine

quality of man's nature, just this disinterested love of a free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake, — it is noticeable, I say, that this word has in our language no sense of the kind, no sense but a rather bad and disparaging one. But criticism, real criticism, is essentially the exercise of this very quality. It obeys an instinct prompting it to try to know the best that is known and thought in the world, irrespectively of practice, politics, and everything of the kind; and to value knowledge and thought as they approach this best, without the intrusion of any other considerations whatever. This is an instinct for which there is, I think, little original sympathy in the practical English nature, and what there was of it has undergone a long benumbing period of blight and suppression in the epoch of concentration which followed the French Revolution.

But epochs of concentration cannot well endure for ever; epochs of expansion, in the due course of things, follow them. Such an epoch of expansion seems to be opening in this country. In the first place all danger of a hostile forcible pressure of foreign ideas upon our practice has long disappeared; like the traveller in the fable, therefore, we begin to wear our cloak a little more loosely. Then, with a long peace, the ideas of Europe steal gradually and amicably in, and mingle, though in infinitesimally small quantities at a time, with our own notions. Then, too, in spite of all that is said about the absorbing and brutalizing influence of our passionate material progress, it seems to me indisputable that this progress is likely, though not certain, to lead in the end to an apparition of intellectual life; and that man, after he has made himself perfectly comfortable and has now to determine what to do with himself next, may begin to remember that he has a mind, and that the mind may be made the source of great pleasure. I grant it is mainly the privilege of faith, at present, to discern this end to our railways, our business, and our fortune-making; but we shall see if, here as elsewhere, faith is not in the end the true prophet. Our ease, our travelling, and our unbounded liberty to hold just as hard and securely as we please to the practice to which our notions have given birth, all tend to beget an inclination to deal a little more freely with these notions themselves, to canvass them a little, to penetrate a little into their real nature. Flutterings of curiosity, in the foreign sense of the word, appear amongst us, and it is in these that criticism must look

to find its account. Criticism first; a time of true creative activity, perhaps, — which, as I have said, must inevitably be preceded amongst us by a time of criticism, — hereafter, when criticism has done its work.

It is of the last importance that English criticism should clearly discern what rule for its course, in order to avail itself of the field now opening to it, and to produce fruit for the future, it ought to take. The rule may be summed up in one word, — disinterestedness. And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called "the practical view of things;" by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them. Else criticism, besides being really false to its own nature, merely continues in the old rut which it has hitherto followed in this country, and will certainly miss the chance now given to it.

For what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It subserves interests not its own. Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of mind the second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted. An organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, having for its main function to understand and utter the best that is known and thought in the world, existing, it may be said, as just an organ for a free play of the mind, we have not. But we have the *Edinburgh Review*, existing as an organ of the old Whigs, and for as much play of the mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Quarterly Review*,

existing as an organ of the Tories, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *British Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the political Dissenters, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Times*, existing as an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that. And so on through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society; every fraction has, as such, its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free disinterested play of mind meets with no favor. Directly this play of mind wants to have more scope, and to forget the pressure of practical considerations a little, it is checked, it is made to feel the chain. We saw this the other day in the extinction, so much to be regretted, of the *Home and Foreign Review*. Perhaps in no organ of criticism in this country was there so much knowledge, so much play of mind; but these could not save it. The *Dublin Review* subordinates play of mind to the practical business of English and Irish Catholicism, and lives. It must needs be that men should act in sects and parties, that each of these sects and parties should have its organ, and should make this organ subserve the interests of its action; but it would be well, too, that there should be a criticism, not the minister of these interests, not their enemy, but absolutely and entirely independent of them. No other criticism will ever attain any real authority or make any real way towards its end, — the creating a current of true and fresh ideas.

It is because criticism has so little kept in the pure intellectual sphere, has so little detached itself from practice, has been so directly polemical and controversial, that it has so ill accomplished, in this country, its best spiritual work; which is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarizing, to lead him towards perfection, by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things. A polemical practical criticism makes men blind even to the ideal imperfection of their practice, makes them willingly assert its ideal perfection, in order the better to secure it against attack; and clearly this is narrowing and baneful for them. If they were reassured on the practical side, speculative considerations of ideal perfection they might be brought to entertain, and their spiritual horizon would thus

gradually widen. Sir Charles Adderley¹ says to the Warwickshire farmers:

"Talk of the improvement of breed! Why, the race we ourselves represent, the men and women, the old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world... The absence of a too enervating climate, too unclouded skies, and a too luxurious nature, has produced so vigorous a race of people, and has rendered us so superior to all the world."

Mr. Roebuck² says to the Sheffield cutlers:

"I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last."

Now obviously there is a peril for poor human nature in words and thoughts of such exuberant self-satisfaction, until we find ourselves safe in the streets of the Celestial City.

"Das wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blicke
Der vorwärts sieht, wie viel noch übrig
bleibt —"

says Goethe; "the little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do." Clearly this is a better line of reflection for weak humanity, so long as it remains on this earthly field of labor and trial.

But neither Sir Charles Adderley nor Mr. Roebuck is by nature inaccessible to considerations of this sort. They only lose sight of them owing to the controversial life we all lead, and the practical form which all speculation takes with us. They have in view opponents whose aim is not ideal, but practical; and in their zeal to uphold their own practice against these innovators, they go so far as even to attribute to this practice an ideal perfection. Somebody has been wanting to introduce a six-pound franchise, or to abolish church-rates, or to collect agricultural statistics by force, or to diminish local self-government. How natural, in reply to such proposals, very likely improper or ill-timed, to go a little beyond the mark and to say stoutly, "Such a race of people as we stand, so superior to all the world! The old Anglo-Saxon race,

the best breed in the whole world! I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last! I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" And so long as criticism answers this dithyramb by insisting that the old Anglo-Saxon race would be still more superior to all others if it had no church-rates, or that our unrivalled happiness would last yet longer with a six-pound franchise, so long will the strain, "The best breed in the whole world!" swell louder and louder, everything ideal and refining will be lost out of sight, and both the assailed and their critics will remain in a sphere, to say the truth, perfectly unvital, a sphere in which spiritual progression is impossible. But let criticism leave church-rates and the franchise alone, and in the most candid spirit, without a single lurking thought of practical innovation, confront with our dithyramb this paragraph on which I stumbled in a newspaper immediately after reading Mr. Roebuck:

"A shocking child murder has just been committed at Nottingham. A girl named Wragg left the workhouse there on Saturday morning with her young illegitimate child. The child was soon afterwards found dead on Mapperly Hills, having been strangled. Wragg is in custody."

Nothing but that; but, in juxtaposition with the absolute eulogies of Sir Charles Adderley and Mr. Roebuck, how eloquent, how suggestive are those few lines! "Our old Anglo-Saxon breed, the best in the whole world!" — how much that is harsh and ill-favored there is in this best! *Wragg!* If we are to talk of ideal perfection, of "the best in the whole world," has any one reflected what a touch of grossness in our race, what an original shortcoming in the more delicate spiritual perceptions, is shown by the natural growth amongst us of such hideous names, — Higginbottom, Stiggins, Bugg! In Ionia and Attica they were luckier in this respect than "the best race in the world;" by the Illissus there was no Wragg, poor thing! And "our unrivalled happiness;" — what an element of grimness, bareness, and hideousness mixes with it and blurs it; the workhouse, the dismal Mapperly Hills, — how dismal those who have seen them will remember; — the gloom, the smoke, the cold, the strangled illegitimate child! "I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" Perhaps not, one is inclined to answer; but at any rate, in that case, the world is very much to be pitied. And the

¹ Sir Charles Bowyer Adderley, Baron Norton (1814-1905), a leading Tory politician.

² John Arthur Roebuck (1802-79), Member of Parliament for Sheffield.

final touch, — short, bleak and inhuman: *Wragg is in custody*. The sex lost in the confusion of our unrivalled happiness; or (shall I say?) the superfluous Christian name lopped off by the straightforward vigor of our old Anglo-Saxon breed! There is profit for the spirit in such contrasts as this; criticism serves the cause of perfection by establishing them. By eluding sterile conflict, by refusing to remain in the sphere where alone narrow and relative conceptions have any worth and validity, criticism may diminish its momentary importance, but only in this way has it a chance of gaining admittance for those wider and more perfect conceptions to which all its duty is really owed. Mr. Roebuck will have a poor opinion of an adversary who replies to his defiant songs of triumph only by murmuring under his breath, *Wragg is in custody*; but in no other way will these songs of triumph be induced gradually to moderate themselves, to get rid of what in them is excessive and offensive, and to fall into a softer and truer key.

It will be said that it is a very subtle and indirect action which I am thus prescribing for criticism, and that, by embracing in this manner the Indian virtue of detachment and abandoning the sphere of practical life, it condemns itself to a slow and obscure work. Slow and obscure it may be, but it is the only proper work of criticism. The mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are; very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them. On these inadequate ideas repose, and must repose, the general practice of the world. That is as much as saying that whoever sets himself to see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle resolutely doing its own work that adequate ideas will ever get current at all. The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex; most of all will this be the case where that life is so powerful as it is in England. But it is only by remaining collected, and refusing to lend himself to the point of view of the practical man, that the critic can do the practical man any service; and it is only by the greatest sincerity in pursuing his own course, and by at last convincing even the practical man of his sincerity, that he can escape misunderstandings which perpetually threaten him.

For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions

truth and the highest culture greatly find their account. But it is not easy to lead a practical man, — unless you reassure him as to your practical intentions, you have no chance of leading him, — to see that a thing which he has always been used to look at from one side only, which he greatly values, and which, looked at from that side, quite deserves, perhaps, all the prizing and admiring which he bestows upon it, — that this thing, looked at from another side, may appear much less beneficent and beautiful, and yet retain all its claims to our practical allegiance. Where shall we find language innocent enough, how shall we make the spotless purity of our intentions evident enough, to enable us to say to the political Englishman that the British constitution itself, which, seen from the practical side, looks such a magnificent organ of progress and virtue, seen from the speculative side, — with its compromises, its love of facts, its horror of theory, its studied avoidance of clear thoughts, — that, seen from this side, our august constitution sometimes looks, — forgive me, shade of Lord Somers!¹ — a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines? How is Cobbett² to say this and not be misunderstood, blackened as he is with the smoke of a lifelong conflict in the field of political practice? how is Mr. Carlyle to say it and not be misunderstood, after his furious raid into this field with his *Latter-day Pamphlets*? how is Mr. Ruskin, after his pugnacious political economy? I say, the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere, if he wants to make a beginning for that more free speculative treatment of things, which may perhaps one day make its benefits felt even in this sphere, but in a natural and thence irresistible manner.

Do what he will, however, the critic will still remain exposed to frequent misunderstandings, and nowhere so much as in this country. For here people are particularly indisposed even to comprehend that without this free disinterested treatment of things, truth and the highest culture are out of the question. So immersed are they in practical life, so accustomed to take all their notions from this life and its processes, that they are apt to think that truth and culture themselves can be reached by the processes of this life, and that it is an impertinent singularity to

¹ A leading statesman of the eighteenth century, noted as a defender of the constitution.

² William Cobbett (1766-1835), a radical journalist.

think of reaching them in any other. "We are all *terre filii*,"¹ cries their eloquent advocate; "all Philistines together. Away with the notion of proceeding by any other way than the way dear to the Philistines; let us have a social movement, let us organize and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought, let us call it *the liberal party*, and let us all stick to each other, and back each other up. Let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many. Don't let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought; we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along. If one of us speaks well, applaud him; if one of us speaks ill, applaud him too; we are all in the same movement, we are all liberals, we are all in pursuit of truth." In this way the pursuit of truth becomes really a social, practical, pleasurable affair, almost requiring a chairman, a secretary, and advertisements; with the excitement of a little resistance, an occasional scandal, to give the happy sense of difficulty overcome; but, in general, plenty of bustle and very little thought. To act is so easy, as Goethe says; to think is so hard! It is true that the critic has many temptations to go with the stream, to make one of the party movement, one of these *terre filii*; it seems ungracious to refuse to be a *terre filius*, when so many excellent people are; but the critic's duty is to refuse, or, if resistance is vain, at least to cry with Obermann:² *Résistons en résistant*.³

How serious a matter it is to try and resist, I had ample opportunity of experiencing when I ventured some time ago to criticize the celebrated first volume of Bishop Colenso.⁴ The echoes of the storm which was then raised I still, from time to time, hear grumbling round me. That storm arose out of a misunderstanding almost inevitable. It is a result of no little culture to attain to a clear perception that science and religion are two wholly different things; the multitude will for ever confuse them; but happily that is of no great real importance, for while it imagines itself to live by its false science, it does really live by its true religion. Dr. Colenso, however, in his first volume did all he could to strengthen the confusion, and to make it dangerous. He did this with the best

intentions, I freely admit, and with the most candid ignorance that this was the natural effect of what he was doing; but, says Joubert, "Ignorance, which in matters of morals extenuates the crime, is itself, in intellectual matters, a crime of the first order." I criticized Bishop Colenso's speculative confusion. Immediately there was a cry raised: "What is this? here is a liberal attacking a liberal. Do not you belong to the movement? are not you a friend of truth? Is not Bishop Colenso in pursuit of truth? then speak with proper respect of his book. Dr. Stanley is another friend of truth, and you speak with proper respect of his book; why make these invidious differences? both books are excellent, admirable, liberal; Bishop Colenso's perhaps the most so, because it is the boldest, and will have the best practical consequences for the liberal cause. Do you want to encourage to the attack of a brother liberal his, and your, and our implacable enemies, the *Church and State Review* or the *Record*, — the High Church rhinoceros and the Evangelical hyæna? Be silent, therefore; or rather speak, speak as loud as ever you can! and go into ecstasies over the eighty and odd pigeons."

But criticism cannot follow this coarse and indiscriminate method. It is unfortunately possible for a man in pursuit of truth to write a book which reposes upon a false conception. Even the practical consequences of a book are to genuine criticism no recommendation of it, if the book is, in the highest sense, blundering. I see that a lady who herself, too, is in pursuit of truth, and who writes with great ability, but a little too much, perhaps, under the influence of the practical spirit of the English liberal movement, classes Bishop Colenso's book and M. Renan's together, in her survey of the religious state of Europe, as facts of the same order, works; both of them, of "great importance;" "great ability, power, and skill;" Bishop Colenso's, perhaps, the most powerful; at least, Miss Cobbe¹ gives special expression to her gratitude that to Bishop Colenso "has been given the strength to grasp, and the courage to teach, truths of such deep import." In the same way, more than one popular writer has compared him to Luther. Now it is just this kind of false estimate which the critical spirit is, it seems to me, bound to resist. It is really the strongest possible proof of the low ebb at

¹ sons of the earth.

² The title of a book by the French romanticist Senancour (1770-1846) which Arnold greatly admired.

³ Let us perish in resisting.

⁴ John William Colenso (1814-83), Bishop of Natal, whose heresy on the subject of eternal punishment aroused a storm of ecclesiastical controversy.

¹ Frances Power Cobbe, a popular writer on religious topics.

which, in England, the critical spirit is, that while the critical hit in the religious literature of Germany is Dr. Strauss's book,¹ in that of France M. Renan's book, the book of Bishop Colenso is the critical hit in the religious literature of England. Bishop Colenso's book reposes on a total misconception of the essential elements of the religious problem, as that problem is now presented for solution. To criticism therefore, which seeks to have the best that is known and thought on this problem, it is, however well meant, of no importance whatever. M. Renan's book attempts a new synthesis of the elements furnished to us by the Four Gospels. It attempts, in my opinion, a synthesis, perhaps premature, perhaps impossible, certainly not successful. Perhaps we shall always have to acquiesce in Fleury's sentence on such recastings of the Gospel-story: *Quiconque s'imagine la pouvoir mieux écrire, ne l'entend pas.*² M. Renan had himself passed by anticipation a like sentence on his own work, when he said: "If a new presentation of the character of Jesus were offered to me, I would not have it; its very clearness would be, in my opinion, the best proof of its insufficiency." His friends may with perfect truth rejoin that at the sight of the Holy Land, and of the actual scene of the Gospel-story, all the current of M. Renan's thoughts may have naturally changed, and a new casting of that story irresistibly suggested itself to him; and that this is just a case for applying Cicero's maxim: *Change of mind is not inconsistency — nemo doctus unquam mutationem consilii instantiam dixit esse.*³ Nevertheless, for criticism, M. Renan's first thought must still be the truer one, as long as his new casting so fails more fully to commend itself, more fully (to use Coleridge's happy phrase about the Bible) to find us. Still M. Renan's attempt is, for criticism, of the most real interest and importance, since, with all its difficulty, a fresh synthesis of the New Testament *data*, — not a making war on them, in Voltaire's fashion, not a leaving them out of mind in the world's fashion, but the putting a new construction upon them, the taking them from under the old traditional, conventional point of view and placing them under a new one, — is the very essence of the religious

problem, as now presented; and only by efforts in this direction can it receive a solution.

Again, in the same spirit in which she judges Bishop Colenso, Miss Cobbe, like so many earnest liberals of our practical race, both here and in America, herself sets vigorously about a positive re-construction of religion, about making a religion of the future out of hand, or at least setting about making it. We must not rest, she and they are always thinking and saying, in negative criticism, we must be creative and constructive; hence we have such works as her recent *Religious Duty*, and works still more considerable, perhaps, by others, which will be in every one's mind. These works often have much ability; they often spring out of sincere convictions, and a sincere wish to do good; and they sometimes, perhaps, do good. Their fault is (if I may be permitted to say so) one which they have in common with the British College of Health, in the New Road. Every one knows the British College of Health; it is that building with the lion and the statue of the Goddess Hygeia before it; at least I am sure about the lion, though I am not absolutely certain about the Goddess Hygeia. This building does credit, perhaps, to the resources of Dr. Morrison¹ and his disciples; but it falls a good deal short of one's idea of what a British College of Health ought to be. In England, where we hate public interference and love individual enterprise, we have a whole crop of places like the British College of Health; the grand name without the grand thing. Unluckily, creditable to individual enterprise as they are, they tend to impair our taste by making us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to a public institution. The same may be said of the religions of the future of Miss Cobbe and others. Creditable, like the British College of Health, to the resources of their authors, they yet tend to make us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to religious constructions. The historic religions, with all their faults, have had this; it certainly belongs to the religious sentiment, when it truly flowers, to have this; and we impoverish our spirit if we allow a religion of the future without it. What then is the duty of criticism here? To take the practical point of view, to applaud the liberal movement and all its works, — its New

¹ Strauss and Renan both wrote lives of Jesus rationalizing the miraculous narrative of the Gospels.

² Whoever imagines that he has power to write better does not understand it.

³ No wise man ever said that change of opinion was inconsistency.

¹ James Morison (1770-1840), who discovered a "universal remedy" known as Morison's pills.

Road religions of the future into the bargain, — for their general utility's sake? By no means; but to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal.

For criticism, these are elementary laws; but they never can be popular, and in this country they have been very little followed, and one meets with immense obstacles in following them. That is a reason for asserting them again and again. Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. Even with well-meant efforts of the practical spirit it must express dissatisfaction, if in the sphere of the ideal they seem impoverishing and limiting. It must not hurry on to the goal because of its practical importance. It must be patient, and know how to wait; and flexible, and know how to attach itself to things and how to withdraw from them. It must be apt to study and praise elements that for the fulness of spiritual perfection are wanted, even though they belong to a power which in the practical sphere may be maleficent. It must be apt to discern the spiritual shortcomings or illusions of powers that in the practical sphere may be beneficent. And this without any notion of favoring or injuring, in the practical sphere, one power or the other; without any notion of playing off, in this sphere, one power against the other. When one looks, for instance, at the English Divorce Court, — an institution which perhaps has its practical conveniences, but which in the ideal sphere is so hideous; an institution which neither makes divorce impossible nor makes it decent, which allows a man to get rid of his wife, or a wife of her husband, but makes them drag one another first, for the public edification, through a mire of unutterable infamy, — when one looks at this charming institution, I say, with its crowded trials, its newspaper reports, and its money compensations, this institution in which the gross unregenerate British Philistine has indeed stamped an image of himself, — one may be permitted to find the marriage theory of Catholicism refreshing and elevating. Or when Protestantism, in virtue of its supposed rational and intellectual origin, gives the law to criticism too magisterially, criticism may and must remind it that its pretensions, in this respect, are illusive and do it harm; that the Reformation was a moral rather than an intellectual event; that Luther's theory of grace no more exactly reflects the mind of the spirit than

Bossuet's philosophy of history reflects it; and that there is no more antecedent probability of the Bishop of Durham's stock of ideas being agreeable to perfect reason than of Pope Pius the Ninth's. But criticism will not on that account forget the achievements of Protestantism in the practical and moral sphere; nor that, even in the intellectual sphere, Protestantism, though in a blind and stumbling manner, carried forward the Renaissance, while Catholicism threw itself violently across its path.

I lately heard a man of thought and energy contrasting the want of ardor and movement which he now found amongst young men in this country with what he remembered in his own youth, twenty years ago. "What reformers we were then!" he exclaimed; "what a zeal we had! how we canvassed every institution in Church and State, and were prepared to remodel them all on first principles!" He was inclined to regret, as a spiritual flagging, the lull which he saw. I am disposed rather to regard it as a pause in which the turn to a new mode of spiritual progress is being accomplished. Everything was long seen, by the young and ardent amongst us, in inseparable connection with politics and practical life. We have pretty well exhausted the benefits of seeing things in this connection, we have got all that can be got by so seeing them. Let us try a more disinterested mode of seeing them; let us betake ourselves more to the serener life of the mind and spirit. This life, too, may have its excesses and dangers; but they are not for us at present. Let us think of quietly enlarging our stock of true and fresh ideas, and not, as soon as we get an idea or half an idea, be running out with it into the street, and trying to make it rule there. Our ideas will, in the end, shape the world all the better for maturing a little. Perhaps in fifty years' time it will in the English House of Commons be an objection to an institution that it is an anomaly, and my friend the Member of Parliament will shudder in his grave. But let us in the meanwhile rather endeavor that in twenty years' time it may, in English literature, be an objection to a proposition that it is absurd. That will be a change so vast, that the imagination almost fails to grasp it. *Ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.*¹

If I have insisted so much on the course which criticism must take where politics and religion are concerned, it is because, where these burning matters are in question, it is

¹ From the renewal of the generations order is born..

most likely to go astray. I have wished, above all, to insist on the attitude which criticism should adopt toward things in general; on its right tone and temper of mind. But then comes another question as to the subject-matter which literary criticism should seek. Here in general, its course is determined for it by the idea which is the law of its being; the idea of a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas. By the very nature of things, as England is not all the world, much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth, must be foreign; by the nature of things, again, it is just this that we are least likely to know, while English thought is streaming in upon us from all sides, and takes excellent care that we shall not be ignorant of its existence. The English critic, therefore, must dwell much on foreign thought, and with particular heed on any part of it, which, while significant and fruitful in itself, is for any reason specially likely to escape him. Again, judging is often spoken of as the critic's one business, and so in some sense it is; but the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is the valuable one; and thus knowledge, and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself. And it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it, — but insensibly, and in the second place, not the first, as a sort of companion and clue, not as an abstract law-giver, — that he will generally do most good to his readers. Sometimes, no doubt, for the sake of establishing an author's place in literature, and his relation to a central standard (and if this is not done, how are we to get at our *best in the world*?) criticism may have to deal with a subject-matter so familiar that fresh knowledge is out of the question, and then it must be all judgment; an enunciation and detailed application of principles. Here the great safeguard is never to let oneself become abstract, always to retain an intimate and lively consciousness of the truth of what one is saying, and, the moment this fails us, to be sure that something is wrong. Still, under all circumstances, this mere judgment and application of principles is, in itself, not the most satisfactory work to the critic; like mathematics, it is tautological, and cannot well give us, like fresh learning, the sense of creative activity.

But stop, someone will say; all this talk is of no practical use to us whatever; this criticism of yours is not what we have in our minds when we speak of criticism; when we speak of critics and criticism, we mean critics and criticism of the current English literature of the day; when you offer to tell criticism of its function, it is to this criticism that we expect you to address yourself. I am sorry for it for I am afraid I must disappoint these expectations. I am bound by my own definition of criticism: a *disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world*. How much of current English literature comes into this "best that is known and thought in the world"? Not very much, I fear; certainly less, at this moment, than of the current literature of France or Germany. Well, then, am I to alter my definition of criticism, in order to meet the requirements of a number of practising English critics, who, after all, are free in their choice of a business? that would be making criticism lend itself to one of those alien practical considerations, which, I have said, are so fatal to it. One may say, indeed, to those who have to deal with the mass — so much better disregarded — of current English literature, that they may at all events endeavor, in dealing with this, to try it, so far as they can, by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world: one may say, that to get anywhere near this standard, every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own; and the more unlike his own, the better. But, after all, the criticism I am really concerned with — the criticism which alone can much help us for the future, the criticism which, throughout Europe, is at the present moment meant, when so much stress is laid on the importance of criticism and the critical spirit — is a criticism which regards Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?

There is so much inviting us! — what are

we to take? what will nourish us in growth towards perfection? That is the question which, with the immense field of life and literature lying before him, the critic has to answer: for himself first, afterwards for others. In this idea of the critic's business the essays brought together in the following pages have had their origin; in this idea, widely different as are their subjects, they have, perhaps, their unity.

I compare with what I said at the beginning: to have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive, and it is not denied to criticism to have it; but then criticism must be sincere, simple, flexible, ardent, ever widening its knowledge. Then it may have, in no contemptible measure, a joyful sense of creative activity; a sense which a man of insight and conscience will prefer to what he might derive from a poor, starved, fragmentary, inadequate creation. And at some epochs no other creation is possible.

Still, in full measure, the sense of creative activity belongs only to genuine creation; in literature we must never forget that. But what true man of letters ever can forget it? It is no such common matter for a gifted nature to come into possession of a current of true and living ideas, and to produce amidst the inspiration of them, that we are likely to underrate it. The epochs of Æschylus and Shakespeare make us feel their pre-eminence. In an epoch like those is, no doubt, the true life of literature; there is the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon. That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness: but to have desired to enter it, to have saluted it from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among contemporaries; it will certainly be the best title to esteem with posterity.

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

1867

The opening chapter of *Culture and Anarchy: an essay in Political and Social Criticism*, first published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1867-68, and in book form in 1869. The chapter-title is an expression taken from Swift meaning Beauty and Intelligence. Here Arnold continues the argument, advanced in the preceding essay, for the pursuit of perfection through intellectual progress.

The disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; sometimes, indeed, they make its

motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people who have not got it. No serious man would call this *culture*, or attach any value to it, as culture, at all. To find the real ground for the very different estimate which serious people will set upon culture, we must find some motive for culture in the terms of which may lie a real ambiguity; and such a motive the word *curiosity* gives us.

I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us the word is always used in a somewhat disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity, but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity. In the *Quarterly Review*, some little time ago, was an estimate of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte-Beuve, and a very inadequate estimate it in my judgment was. And its inadequacy consisted chiefly in this: that in our English way it left out of sight the double sense really involved in the word *curiosity*, thinking enough was said to stamp M. Sainte-Beuve with blame if it was said that he was impelled in his operations as a critic by curiosity, and omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte-Beuve himself, and many other people with him, would consider that this was praise-worthy and not blameworthy, or to point out why it ought really to be accounted worthy of blame and not of praise. For, as there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile, and merely a disease, so there is certainly a curiosity, — a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are, — which is, in an intelligent being, natural and laudable. Nay, and the very desire to see things as they are implies a balance and regulation of mind which is not often attained without fruitful effort, and which is the very opposite of the blind and diseased impulse of mind which is what we mean to blame when we blame curiosity. Montesquieu says: "The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to augment the excellence of our

nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested, and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term *curiosity* stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbor, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it, — motives eminently such as are called social, — come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and preëminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a *study of perfection*. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As, in the first view of it, we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's words: "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent!" so, in the second view of it, there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson: "To make reason and the will of God prevail!"

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be over-hasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because its turn is for acting rather than thinking and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for a basis of action; what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy notions of reason and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which is not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can re-

member that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute.

This culture is more interesting and more far-reaching than that other, which is founded solely on the scientific passion for knowing. But it needs times of faith and ardor, times when the intellectual horizon is opening and widening all around us, to flourish in. And is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up, and are not new lights finding free passage to shine in upon us? For a long time there was no passage for them to make their way in upon us, and then it was of no use to think of adapting the world's action to them. Where was the hope of making reason and the will of God prevail among people who had a routine which they had christened reason and the will of God, in which they were inextricably bound, and beyond which they had no power of looking? But now the iron force of adhesion to the old routine — social, political, religious — has wonderfully yielded; the iron force of exclusion of all which is new has wonderfully yielded. The danger now is, not that people should obstinately refuse to allow anything but their old routine to pass for reason and the will of God, but either that they should allow some novelty or other to pass for these too easily, or else that they should underrate the importance of them altogether, and think it enough to follow action for its own sake, without troubling themselves to make reason and the will of God prevail therein. Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, is the study and pursuit of perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclusion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new.

The moment this view of culture is seized, the moment it is regarded not solely as the endeavor to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to, — to learn, in short, the will of God, — the moment, I say, culture is considered not merely as the endeavor to *see* and *learn* this, but as the endeavor, also, to make it *prevail*, the moral, social, and beneficent character of culture becomes manifest. The mere

1 Thomas Wilson (died 1755), author of *Maxims*, frequently praised by Arnold.

endeavor to see and learn the truth for our own personal satisfaction is indeed a commencement for making it prevail, a preparing the way for this, which always serves this, and is wrongly, therefore, stamped with blame absolutely in itself and not only in its caricature and degeneration. But perhaps it has got stamped with blame, and disparaged with the dubious title of curiosity, because in comparison with this wider endeavor of such great and plain utility it looks selfish, petty, and unprofitable.

And religion, the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself, — religion, that voice of the deepest human experience, — does not only enjoin and sanction the aim which is the great aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail; but also, in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with that which culture — culture seeking the determination of this question through all the voices of human experience which have been heard upon it, of art, science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion, in order to give a greater fulness and certainty to its solution — likewise reaches. Religion says: *The kingdom of God is within you*; and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an *internal* condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality. It places it in the ever-increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature. As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture." Not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion.

And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a *general* expansion. Perfection, as culture

conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, once more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that "to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

But, finally, perfection — as culture from a thorough disinterested study of human nature and human experience learns to conceive it — is a harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us.

If culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances, — it is clear that culture, instead of being the frivolous and useless thing which Mr. Bright, and Mr. Frederic Harrison, and many other Liberals are apt to call it, has a very important function to fulfil for mankind. And this function is particularly important in our modern world, of which the whole civilization is, to a much greater degree than the civilization of Greece and Rome, mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so. But above all in our own country has culture a weighty part to perform, because here that mechanical character, which civilization tends to take everywhere, is shown in the most eminent degree. Indeed nearly all the characters of perfection, as culture teaches us to fix them, meet in this country with some powerful tendency which thwarts them and sets them at defiance. The idea of perfection as an *inward* condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilization in esteem with us, and nowhere, as I have said, so much in esteem as with us. The idea of perfection as a *general* expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individual's personality, our

maxim of "every man for himself." Above all, the idea of perfection as a *harmonious* expansion of human nature is at variance with our want of flexibility, with our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. So culture has a rough task to achieve in this country. Its preachers have, and are likely long to have, a hard time of it, and they will much oftener be regarded, for a great while to come, as elegant or spurious Jeremiahs than as friends and benefactors. That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service if they persevere. And, meanwhile, the mode of action they have to pursue, and the sort of habits they must fight against, ought to be made quite clear for every one to see, who may be willing to look at the matter attentively and dispassionately.

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organizations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them. I have before now noticed Mr. Roebuck's stock argument for proving the greatness and happiness of England as she is, and for quite stopping the mouths of all gain-sayers. Mr. Roebuck is never weary of reiterating this argument of his, so I do not know why I should be weary of noticing it. "May not every man in England say what he likes?" — Mr. Roebuck perpetually asks; and that, he thinks, is quite sufficient, and when every man may say what he likes, our aspirations ought to be satisfied. But the aspirations of culture, which is the study of perfection, are not satisfied, unless what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying, — has good in it, and more good than bad. In the same way the *Times*, replying to some foreign strictures on the dress, looks, and behavior of the English abroad, urges that the English ideal is that every one should be free to do and to look just as he likes. But culture indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may

like the rule by which he fashions himself, but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.

And in the same way with respect to railroads and coal. Every one must have observed the strange language current during the late discussions as to the possible failure of our supplies of coal. Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England. But what *is* greatness? — culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest, and admiration; and the outward proof of possessing greatness is that we excite love, interest, and admiration. If England were swallowed up by the sea to-morrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the love, interest, and admiration of mankind, — would most, therefore, show the evidences of having possessed greatness, — the England of the last twenty years, or the England of Elizabeth, of a time of splendid spiritual effort, but when our coal, and our industrial operations depending on coal, were very little developed? Well, then, what an unsound habit of mind it must be which makes us talk of things like coal or iron as constituting the greatness of England, and how salutary a friend is culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and thus dissipating delusions of this kind and fixing standards of perfection that are real!

Wealth, again, that end to which our prodigious works for material advantage are directed, — the commonest of common-places tells us how men are always apt to regard wealth as a precious end in itself; and certainly they have never been so apt thus to regard it as they are in England at the present time. Never did people believe anything more firmly than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery, but really to perceive and feel that it is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines. The people who believe most that our greatness and welfare are proved

by our being very rich, and who most give their lives and thoughts to becoming rich, are just the very people whom we call Philistines. Culture says: "Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds; would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one was to become just like these people by having it?" And thus culture begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarized, even if it cannot save the present.

Population, again, and bodily health and vigor, are things which are nowhere treated in such an unintelligent, misleading, exaggerated way as in England. Both are really machinery; yet how many people all around us do we see rest in them and fail to look beyond them! Why, one has heard people, fresh from reading certain articles of the *Times* on the Registrar-General's returns of marriages and births in this country, who would talk of our large English families in quite a solemn strain, as if they had something in itself beautiful, elevating, and meritorious in them; as if the British Philistine would have only to present himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep as a matter of right!

But bodily health and vigor, it may be said, are not to be classed with wealth and population as mere machinery; they have a more real and essential value. True; but only as they are more intimately connected with a perfect spiritual condition than wealth or population are. The moment we disjoin them from the idea of a perfect spiritual condition, and pursue them, as we do pursue them, for their own sake and as ends in themselves, our worship of them becomes as mere worship of machinery, as our worship of wealth or population, and as unintelligent and vulgarizing a worship as that is. Every one with anything like an adequate idea of human perfection has distinctly marked this subordination to higher and spiritual ends of the cultivation of bodily vigor and activity. "Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things," says the

author of the Epistle to Timothy. And the utilitarian Franklin says just as explicitly: — "Eat and drink such an exact quantity as suits the constitution of thy body, *in reference to the services of the mind.*" But the point of view of culture, keeping the mark of human perfection simply and broadly in view, and not assigning to this perfection, as religion or utilitarianism assigns to it, a special and limited character, this point of view, I say, of culture is best given by these words of Epictetus: "It is a sign of *εὐψυχία*," says he, — that is, of a nature not finely tempered, — "to give yourselves up to things which relate to the body; to make, for instance, a great fuss about exercise, a great fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinking, a great fuss about walking, a great fuss about riding. All these things ought to be done merely by the way: the formation of the spirit and character must be our real concern." This is admirable; and, indeed, the Greek word *εὐψυχία*, a finely tempered nature, gives exactly the notion of perfection as culture brings us to conceive it: a harmonious perfection, a perfection in which the characters of beauty and intelligence are both present, which unites "the two noblest of things," — as Swift, who of one of the two, at any rate, had himself all too little, most happily calls them in his *Battle of the Books*, — "the two noblest of things, *sweetness and light.*" The *εὐψυχία* is the man who tends towards sweetness and light; the *ἀφύχια*, on the other hand, is our Philistine. The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy idea of the essential character of human perfection; and Mr. Bright's misconception of culture, as a smattering of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after all, from this wonderful significance of the Greeks having affected the very machinery of our education, and is in itself a kind of homage to it.

In thus making sweetness and light to be characters of perfection, culture is of like spirit with poetry, follows one law with poetry. Far more than on our freedom, our population, and our industrialism, many amongst us rely upon our religious organizations to save us. I have called religion a yet more important manifestation of human nature than poetry, because it has worked on a broader scale for perfection, and with greater masses of men. But the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all its sides, which is the dominant idea

of poetry, is a true and invaluable idea, though it has not yet had the success that the idea of conquering the obvious faults of our animality, and of a human nature perfect on the moral side, — which is the dominant idea of religion, — has been enabled to have; and it is destined, adding to itself the religious idea of a devout energy, to transform and govern the other.

The best art and poetry of the Greeks, in which religion and poetry are one, in which the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all sides adds to itself a religious and devout energy, and works in the strength of that, is on this account of such surpassing interest and instructiveness for us, though it was — as, having regard to the human race in general, and, indeed, having regard to the Greeks themselves, we must own — a premature attempt, an attempt which for success needed the moral and religious fibre in humanity to be more braced and developed than it had yet been. But Greece did not err in having the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection, so present and paramount. It is impossible to have this idea too present and paramount; only, the moral fibre must be braced too. And we, because we have braced the moral fibre, are not on that account in the right way, if at the same time the idea of beauty, harmony, and complete human perfection, is wanting or misapprehended amongst us; and evidently it *is* wanting or misapprehended at present. And when we rely as we do on our religious organizations, which in themselves do not and cannot give us this idea, and think we have done enough if we make them spread and prevail, then, I say, we fall into our common fault of overvaluing machinery.

Nothing is more common than for people to confound the inward peace and satisfaction which follows the subduing of the obvious faults of our animality with what I may call absolute inward peace and satisfaction, — the peace and satisfaction which are reached as we draw near to complete spiritual perfection, and not merely to moral perfection, or rather to relative moral perfection. No people in the world have done more and struggled more to attain this relative moral perfection than our English race has. For no people in the world has the command to *resist the devil*, to *overcome the wicked one*, in the nearest and most obvious sense of those words, had such a pressing force and reality. And we have had our reward, not only in the great worldly prosperity which

our obedience to this command has brought us, but also, and far more, in great inward peace and satisfaction. But to me few things are more pathetic than to see people, on the strength of the inward peace and satisfaction which their rudimentary efforts towards perfection have brought them, employ, concerning their incomplete perfection and the religious organizations within which they have found it, language which properly applies only to complete perfection, and is a far-off echo of the human soul's prophecy of it. Religion itself, I need hardly say, supplies them in abundance with this grand language. And very freely do they use it; yet it is really the severest possible criticism of such an incomplete perfection as alone we have yet reached through our religious organizations.

The impulse of the English race towards moral development and self-conquest has nowhere so powerfully manifested itself as in Puritanism. Nowhere has Puritanism found so adequate an expression as in the religious organization of the Independents. The modern Independents have a newspaper, the *Nonconformist*, written with great sincerity and ability. The motto, the standard, the profession of faith which this organ of theirs carries aloft, is: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." There is sweetness and light, and an ideal of complete harmonious human perfection! One need not go to culture and poetry to find language to judge it. Religion, with its instinct for perfection, supplies language to judge it, — language, too, which is in our mouths every day. "Finally, be of one mind, united in feeling," says St. Peter. There is an ideal which judges the Puritan ideal: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion!" And religious organizations like this are what people believe in, rest in, would give their lives for! Such, I say, is the wonderful virtue of even the beginnings of perfection, of having conquered even the plain faults of our animality, that the religious organization which has helped us to do it can seem to us something precious, salutary, and to be propagated, even when it wears such a brand of imperfection on its forehead as this. And men have got such a habit of giving to the language of religion a special application, of making it a mere jargon, that for the condemnation which religion itself passes on the shortcomings of their religious organizations they have no ear; they

are sure to cheat themselves and to explain this condemnation away. They can only be reached by the criticism which culture, like poetry, speaking a language not to be sophisticated, and resolutely testing these organizations by the ideal of a human perfection complete on all sides, applies to them.

But men of culture and poetry, it will be said, are again and again failing, and failing conspicuously, in the necessary first stage to a harmonious perfection, in the subduing of the great obvious faults of our animality, which it is the glory of these religious organizations to have helped us to subdue. True, they do often so fail. They have often been without the virtues as well as the faults of the Puritan; it has been one of their dangers that they so felt the Puritan's faults that they too much neglected the practice of his virtues. I will not, however, exculpate them at the Puritan's expense. They have often failed in morality, and morality is indispensable. And they have been punished for their failure, as the Puritan has been rewarded for his performance. They have been punished wherein they erred; but their ideal of beauty, of sweetness and light, and a human nature complete on all its sides, remains the true ideal of perfection still; just as the Puritan's ideal of perfection remains narrow and inadequate, although for what he did well he has been richly rewarded. Notwithstanding the mighty results of the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage, they and their standard of perfection are rightly judged when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Virgil — souls in whom sweetness and light, and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent — accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Virgil would have found them! In the same way let us judge the religious organizations which we see all around us. Do not let us deny the good and the happiness which they have accomplished; but do not let us fail to see clearly that their idea of human perfection is narrow and inadequate, and that the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion will never bring humanity to its true goal. As I said with regard to wealth: Let us look at the life of those who live in and for it, — so I say with regard to the religious organizations. Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as the *Nonconformist*, — a life of jealousy of the Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons; and then think of it as an ideal of a

human life completing itself on all sides, and aspiring with all its organs after sweetness, light, and perfection!

Another newspaper, representing, like the *Nonconformist*, one of the religious organizations of this country, was a short time ago giving an account of the crowd at Epsom on the Derby day, and of all the vice and hideousness which was to be seen in that crowd; and then the writer turned suddenly round upon Professor Huxley, and asked him how he proposed to cure all this vice and hideousness without religion. I confess I felt disposed to ask the asker this question: and how do you propose to cure it with such a religion as yours? How is the ideal of a life so unlovely, so unattractive, so incomplete, so narrow, so far removed from a true and satisfying ideal of human perfection, as is the life of your religious organization as you yourself reflect it, to conquer and transform all this vice and hideousness? Indeed, the strongest plea for the study of perfection as pursued by culture, the clearest proof of the actual inadequacy of the idea of perfection held by the religious organizations, — expressing, as I have said, the most widespread effort which the human race has yet made after perfection, — is to be found in the state of our life and society with these in possession of it, and having been in possession of it I know not how many hundred years. We are all of us included in some religious organization or other; we all call ourselves, in the sublime and aspiring language of religion which I have before noticed, *children of God*. Children of God; — it is an immense pretension! — and how are we to justify it? By the works which we do, and the words which we speak. And the work which we collective children of God do, our grand centre of life, our city which we have builded for us to dwell in, is London! London, with its unutterable external hideousness, and with its internal canker of *public egestas, privatim opulentia*,¹ — to use the words which Sallust puts into Cato's mouth about Rome, — unequalled in the world! The word, again, which we children of God speak, the voice which most hits our collective thought, the newspaper with the largest circulation in England, nay, with the largest circulation in the whole world, is the *Daily Telegraph*! I say that when our religious organizations — which I admit to express the most considerable effort after perfection that our race has yet made —

¹ "Poverty widespread, opulence among individuals." (*Catiline*, 52.)

land us in no better result than this, it is high time to examine carefully their idea of perfection, to see whether it does not leave out of account sides and forces of human nature which we might turn to great use; whether it would not be more operative if it were more complete. And I say that the English reliance on our religious organizations and on their ideas of human perfection just as they stand, is like our reliance on freedom, on muscular Christianity, on population, on coal, on wealth, — mere belief in machinery, and unfruitful; and that it is wholesomely counteracted by culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and on drawing the human race onwards to a more complete, a harmonious perfection. . . .

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater! — the passion for making them *prevail*. It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a *national* glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be *real* thought and *real* beauty; *real* sweetness and *real* light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our re-

ligious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way: but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely, — nourished, and not bound by them.

This is the *social idea*; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. Such a man was Abelard in the Middle Ages, in spite of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abelard excited. Such were Lessing and Herder in Germany, at the end of the last century; and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they *humanized* knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With Saint Augustine they said: "Let us not leave thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge, as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament, make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth; and thou shalt crown the year

with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth laborers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new laborers to new seed-times, whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

ESSAY ON WORDSWORTH

1879

Arnold was of all the Victorian poets most distinctly in the tradition of Wordsworth. During his boyhood his family spent their summers at Fox How, in the Lake Country, where he had some association with the older poet. When he was asked to prepare a selection of Wordsworth's poems for *The Golden Treasury Series*, he gave himself to the task with enthusiasm. The present essay is his introduction to that volume.

I remember hearing Lord Macaulay say, after Wordsworth's death, when subscriptions were being collected to found a memorial of him, that ten years earlier more money could have been raised in Cambridge alone, to do honor to Wordsworth, than was now raised all through the country. Lord Macaulay had, as we know, his own heightened and telling way of putting things, and we must always make allowance for it. But probably it is true that Wordsworth has never, either before or since, been so accepted and popular, so established in possession of the minds of all who profess to care for poetry, as he was between the years 1830 and 1840, and at Cambridge. From the very first, no doubt, he had his believers and witnesses. But I have myself heard him declare that, for he knew not how many years, his poetry had never brought him in enough to buy his shoe-strings. The poetry-reading public was very slow to recognize him, and was very easily drawn away from him. Scott effaced him with this public. Byron effaced him.

The death of Byron seemed, however, to make an opening for Wordsworth. Scott, who had for some time ceased to produce poetry himself, and stood before the public as a great novelist; Scott, too genuine himself not to feel the profound genuineness of Wordsworth, and with an instinctive recognition of his firm hold on nature and of his local truth, always admired him sincerely, and praised him generously. The influence of Coleridge upon young men of ability was then powerful, and was still gathering strength; this influence told entirely in favor of Wordsworth's poetry. Cambridge was a

place where Coleridge's influence had great action, and where Wordsworth's poetry, therefore, flourished especially. But even amongst the general public its sale grew large, the eminence of its author was widely recognized, and Rydal Mount became an object of pilgrimage. I remember Wordsworth relating how one of the pilgrims, a clergyman, asked him if he had ever written anything besides *The Guide to the Lakes*. Yes, he answered modestly, he had written verses. Not every pilgrim was a reader, but the vogue was established, and the stream of pilgrims came.

Mr. Tennyson's decisive appearance dates from 1842. One cannot say that he effaced Wordsworth as Scott and Byron had effaced him. The poetry of Wordsworth had been so long before the public, the suffrage of good judges was so steady and so strong in its favor, that by 1842 the verdict of posterity, one may almost say, had been already pronounced, and Wordsworth's English fame was secure. But the vogue, the ear and applause of the great body of poetry-readers, never quite thoroughly perhaps his, he gradually lost more and more, and Mr. Tennyson gained them. Mr. Tennyson drew to himself, and away from Wordsworth, the poetry-reading public, and the new generations. Even in 1850, when Wordsworth died, this diminution of popularity was visible, and occasioned the remark of Lord Macaulay which I quoted at starting.

The diminution has continued. The influence of Coleridge has waned, and Wordsworth's poetry can no longer draw succor from this ally. The poetry has not, however, wanted eulogists; and it may be said to have brought its eulogists luck, for almost every one who has praised Wordsworth's poetry has praised it well. But the public has remained cold, or, at least, undetermined. Even the abundance of Mr. Palgrave's fine and skilfully chosen specimens of Wordsworth, in *The Golden Treasury*, surprised many readers, and gave offense to not a few. To tenth-rate critics and compilers, for whom any violent shock to the public taste would be a temerity not to be risked, it is still quite permissible to speak of Wordsworth's poetry, not only with ignorance, but with impertinence. On the Continent he is almost unknown.

I cannot think, then, that Wordsworth has, up to this time, at all obtained his deserts. "Glory," said M. Renan the other day, "glory after all is the thing which has

the best chance of not being altogether vanity." Wordsworth was a homely man, and himself would certainly never have thought of talking of glory as that which, after all, has the best chance of not being altogether vanity. Yet we may well allow that few things are less vain than *real* glory. Let us conceive of the whole group of civilized nations as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working towards a common result; a confederation whose members have a due knowledge both of the past, out of which they all proceed, and of one another. This was the ideal of Goethe, and it is an ideal which will impose itself upon the thoughts of our modern societies more and more. Then to be recognized by the verdict of such a confederation as a master, or even as a seriously and eminently worthy workman, in one's own line of intellectual or spiritual activity, is indeed glory; a glory which it would be difficult to rate too highly. For what could be more beneficent, more salutary? The world is forwarded by having its attention fixed on the best things; and here is a tribunal, free from all suspicion of national and provincial partiality, putting a stamp on the best things, and recommending them for general honor and acceptance. A nation, again, is furthered by recognition of its real gifts and successes; it is encouraged to develop them further. And here is an honest verdict, telling us which of our supposed successes are really, in the judgment of the great impartial world, and not in our private judgment only, successes, and which are not.

It is so easy to feel pride and satisfaction in one's own things, so hard to make sure that one is right in feeling it! We have a great empire. But so had Nebuchadnezzar. We extol the "unrivalled happiness" of our national civilization. But then comes a candid friend,¹ and remarks that our upper class is materialized, our middle class vulgarized, and our lower class brutalized. We are proud of our painting, our music. But we find that in the judgment of other people our painting is questionable, and our music non-existent. We are proud of our men of science. And here it turns out that the world is with us; we find that in the judgment of other people, too, Newton among the dead, and Mr. Darwin among the living, hold as high a place as they hold in our national opinion.

Finally, we are proud of our poets and poetry. Now poetry is nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth. It is no small thing, therefore, to succeed eminently in poetry. And so much is required for duly estimating success here, that about poetry it is perhaps hardest to arrive at a sure general verdict, and takes longest. Meanwhile, our own conviction of the superiority of our national poets is not decisive, is almost certain to be mingled, as we see constantly in English eulogy of Shakespeare, with much of provincial infatuation. And we know what was the opinion current amongst our neighbors the French — people of taste, acuteness, and quick literary tact — not a hundred years ago, about our great poets. The old *Bibliographie Universelle*² notices the pretension of the English to a place for their poets among the chief poets of the world, and says that this is a pretension which to no one but an Englishman can ever seem admissible. And the scornful, disparaging things said by foreigners about Shakespeare and Milton, and about our national over-estimate of them, have been often quoted, and will be in every one's remembrance.

A great change has taken place, and Shakespeare is now generally recognized, even in France, as one of the greatest of poets. Yes, some anti-Gallican cynic will say, the French rank him with Corneille and with Victor Hugo! But let me have the pleasure of quoting a sentence about Shakespeare, which I met with by accident not long ago in the *Correspondant*, a French review which not a dozen English people, I suppose, look at. The writer is praising Shakespeare's prose. With Shakespeare, he says, "prose comes in whenever the subject, being more familiar, is unsuited to the majestic English iambic." And he goes on: "Shakespeare is the king of poetic rhythm and style, as well as the king of the realm of thought; along with his dazzling prose, Shakespeare has succeeded in giving us the most varied, the most harmonious verse which has ever sounded upon the human ear since the verse of the Greeks." M. Henry Cochin,³ the writer of this sentence, deserves our gratitude for it; it would not be easy to praise Shakespeare, in a single sentence, more justly. And when a foreigner and a Frenchman writes thus of Shakespeare, and

¹ The work of F. X. de Feller, published in 1781.

² A French lawyer and critic.

³ Arnold's own views.

when Goethe says of Milton, in whom there was so much to repel Goethe rather than to attract him, that "nothing has been ever done so entirely in the sense of the Greeks as *Samson Agonistes*," and that "Milton is in very truth a poet whom we must treat with all reverence," then we understand what constitutes a European recognition of poets and poetry as contradistinguished from a merely national recognition, and that in favor both of Milton and of Shakespeare the judgment of the high court of appeal has finally gone.

I come back to M. Renan's praise of glory, from which I started. Yes, real glory is a most serious thing, glory authenticated by the Amphictyonic Court* of final appeal, definite glory. And even for poets and poetry, long and difficult as may be the process of arriving at the right award, the right award comes at last, the definitive glory rests where it is deserved. Every establishment of such a real glory is good and wholesome for mankind at large, good and wholesome for a nation which produced the poet crowned with it. To the poet himself it can seldom do harm; for he, poor man, is in his grave, probably, long before his glory crowns him.

Wordsworth has been in his grave for some thirty years, and certainly his lovers and admirers cannot flatter themselves that this great and steady light of glory as yet shines over him. He is not fully recognized at home; he is not recognized at all abroad. Yet I firmly believe that the poetical performance of Wordsworth is, after that of Shakespeare and Milton, of which all the world now recognizes the worth, undoubtedly the most considerable in our language from the Elizabethan age to the present time. Chaucer is anterior; and on other grounds, too, he cannot well be brought into the comparison. But taking the roll of our chief poetical names, besides Shakespeare and Milton, from the age of Elizabeth downwards, and going through it, — Spenser, Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Cowper, Burns, Coleridge, Scott, Campbell, Moore, Byron, Shelley, Keats (I mention those only who are dead), — I think it certain that Wordsworth's name deserves to stand, and will finally stand, above them all. Several of the poets named have gifts and excellences which Wordsworth has not. But taking the performance of each as a whole, I say that Wordsworth seems to me to have left a body of poetical work superior in power, in inter-

est, in the qualities which give enduring freshness, to that which any one of the others has left.

But this is not enough to say. I think it certain, further, that if we take the chief poetical names of the Continent since the death of Molière, and, omitting Goethe, confront the remaining names with that of Wordsworth, the result is the same. Let us take Klopstock, Lessing, Schiller, Uhland, Rückert, and Heine for Germany; Filicaja, Alfieri, Manzoni, and Leopardi for Italy; Racine, Boileau, Voltaire, André Chénier, Béranger, Lamartine, Musset, M. Victor Hugo (he has been so long celebrated that although he still lives I may be permitted to name him) for France. Several of these, again, have evidently gifts and excellences to which Wordsworth can make no pretension. But in real poetical achievement it seems to me indubitable that to Wordsworth, here again, belongs the palm. It seems to me that Wordsworth has left behind him a body of poetical work which wears, and will wear, better on the whole than the performance of any one of these personages, so far more brilliant and celebrated, most of them, than the homely poet of Rydal. Wordsworth's performance in poetry is on the whole, in power, in interest, in the qualities which give enduring freshness, superior to theirs.

This is a high claim to make for Wordsworth. But if it is a just claim, if Wordsworth's place among the poets who have appeared in the last two or three centuries is after Shakespeare, Molière, Milton, Goethe, indeed, but before all the rest, then in time Wordsworth will have his due. We shall recognize him in his place, as we recognize Shakespeare and Milton; and not only we ourselves shall recognize him, but he will be recognized by Europe also. Meanwhile, those who recognize him already may do well, perhaps, to ask themselves whether there are not in the case of Wordsworth certain special obstacles which hinder or delay his due recognition by others, and whether these obstacles are not in some measure removable.

The Excursion and *The Prelude*, his poems of greatest bulk, are by no means Wordsworth's best work. His best work is in his shorter pieces, and many indeed are there of these which are of first-rate excellence. But in his seven volumes the pieces of high merit are mingled with a mass of pieces very inferior to them; so inferior to them that it

* The Great Council of Greek cities.

seems wonderful how the same poet should have produced both. Shakespeare frequently has lines and passages in a strain quite false, and which are entirely unworthy of him. But one can imagine him smiling if one could meet him in the Elysian Fields and tell him so; smiling and replying that he knew it perfectly well himself, and what did it matter? But with Wordsworth the case is different. Work altogether inferior, work quite uninspired, flat and dull, is produced by him with evident unconsciousness of its defects, and he presents it to us with the same faith and seriousness as his best work. Now a drama or an epic fill the mind, and one does not look beyond them; but in a collection of short pieces the impression made by one piece requires to be continued and sustained by the piece following. In reading Wordsworth the impression made by one of his fine pieces is too often dulled and spoiled by a very inferior piece coming after it.

Wordsworth composed verses during a space of some sixty years; and it is no exaggeration to say that within one single decade of those years, between 1798 and 1808, almost all his really first-rate work was produced. A mass of inferior work remains, work done before and after this golden prime, imbedding the first-rate work and clogging it, obstructing our approach to it, chilling, not unfrequently, the high-wrought mood with which we leave it. To be recognized far and wide as a great poet, to be possible and receivable as a classic, Wordsworth needs to be relieved of a great deal of the poetical baggage which now encumbers him. To administer this relief is indispensable, unless he is to continue to be a poet for the few only, — a poet valued far below his real worth by the world.

There is another thing. Wordsworth classified his poems not according to any commonly received plan of arrangement, but according to a scheme of mental physiology. He has poems of the fancy, poems of the imagination, poems of sentiment and reflection, and so on. His categories are ingenious but far-fetched, and the result of his employment of them is unsatisfactory. Poems are separated one from another which possess a kinship of subject or of treatment far more vital and deep than the supposed unity of mental origin, which was Wordsworth's reason for joining them with others.

The tact of the Greeks in matters of this kind was infallible. We may rely upon it

that we shall not improve upon the classification adopted by the Greeks for kinds of poetry; that their categories of epic, dramatic, lyric, and so forth, have a natural propriety, and should be adhered to. It may sometimes seem doubtful to which of two categories a poem belongs; whether this or that poem is to be called, for instance, narrative or lyric, lyric or elegiac. But there is to be found in every good poem a strain, a predominant note, which determines the poem as belonging to one of these kinds rather than the other; and here is the best proof of the value of the classification, and of the advantage of adhering to it. Wordsworth's poems will never produce their due effect until they are freed from their present artificial arrangement, and grouped more naturally.

Disengaged from the quantity of inferior work which now obscures them, the best poems of Wordsworth, I hear many people say, would indeed stand out in great beauty, but they would prove to be very few in number, scarcely more than a half a dozen. I maintain, on the other hand, that what strikes me with admiration, what establishes in my opinion Wordsworth's superiority, is the great and ample body of powerful work which remains to him, even after all his inferior work has been cleared away. He gives us so much to rest upon, so much which communicates his spirit and engages ours!

This is of very great importance. If it were a comparison of single pieces, or of three or four pieces, by each poet, I do not say that Wordsworth would stand decisively above Gray, or Burns, or Coleridge, or Keats, or Manzoni, or Heine. It is in his ampler body of powerful work that I find his superiority. His good work itself, his work which counts, is not all of it, of course, of equal value. Some kinds of poetry are in themselves lower kinds than others. The ballad kind is a lower kind; the didactic kind, still more, is a lower kind. Poetry of this latter sort counts, too, sometimes, by its biographical interest partly, not by its poetical interest pure and simple; but then this can only be when the poet producing it has the power and importance of Wordsworth, a power and importance which he assuredly did not establish by such didactic poetry alone. Altogether, it is, I say, by the great body of powerful and significant work which remains to him, after every reduction and deduction has been made, that Wordsworth's superiority is proved.

To exhibit this body of Wordsworth's best work, to clear away obstructions from around it, and to let it speak for itself, is what every lover of Wordsworth should desire. Until this has been done, Wordsworth, whom we, to whom he is dear, all of us know and feel to be so great a poet, has not had a fair chance before the world. When once it has been done, he will make his way best, not by our advocacy of him, but by his own worth and power. We may safely leave him to make his way thus, we who believe that a superior worth and power in poetry finds in mankind a sense responsive to it and disposed at last to recognize it. Yet at the outset, before he has been duly known and recognized, we may do Wordsworth a service, perhaps, by indicating in what his superior power and worth will be found to consist, and in what it will not.

Long ago, in speaking of Homer, I said that the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness. I said that a great poet receives his distinctive character of superiority from his application, under the conditions immutably fixed by the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth, from his application, I say, to his subject, whatever it may be, of the ideas

"On man, on nature, and on human life,"

which he has acquired for himself. The line quoted is Wordsworth's own; and his superiority arises from his powerful use, in his best pieces, his powerful application to his subject, of ideas "on man, on nature, and on human life."

Voltaire, with his signal acuteness, most truly remarked that "no nation has treated in poetry moral ideas with more energy and depth than the English nation." And he adds; "There, it seems to me, is the great merit of the English poets." Voltaire does not mean, by "treating in poetry moral ideas," the composing moral and didactic poems;—that brings us but a very little way in poetry. He means just the same thing as was meant when I spoke above "of the noble and profound application of ideas to life"; and he means the application of these ideas under the conditions fixed for us by the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth. If it is said that to call these ideas *moral* ideas is to introduce a strong and injurious limitation, I answer that it is to do nothing of the kind, because moral ideas are really so main

a part of human life. The question, *how to live*, is itself a moral idea; and it is the question which most interests every man, and with which, in some way or other, he is perpetually occupied. A large sense is of course to be given to the term *moral*. Whatever bears upon the question, "how to live," comes under it.

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but, what thou liv'st,
Live well; how long or short, permit to heaven."

In those fine lines Milton utters, as every one at once perceives, a moral idea. Yes, but so too, when Keats consoles the forward-bending lover on the Grecian Urn, the lover arrested and presented in immortal relief by the sculptor's hand before he can kiss, with the line,

"Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair —", he utters a moral idea. When Shakespeare says, that

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep,"

he utters a moral idea.

Voltaire was right in thinking that the energetic and profound treatment of moral ideas, in this large sense, is what distinguishes the English poetry. He sincerely meant praise, not dispraise or hint of limitation; and they err who suppose that poetic limitation is a necessary consequence of the fact, the fact being granted as Voltaire states it. If what distinguishes the greatest poets is their powerful and profound application of ideas to life, which surely no good critic will deny, then to prefix to the term ideas here the term moral makes hardly any difference, because human life itself is in so preponderating a degree moral.

It is important, therefore, to hold fast to this: that poetry is at bottom a criticism of life; that the greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life,—to the question: How to live. Morals are often treated in a narrow and false fashion; they are bound up with systems of thought and belief which have had their day; they are fallen into the hands of pedants and professional dealers; they grow tiresome to some of us. We find attraction, at times, even in a poetry of revolt against them; in a poetry which might take for its motto Omar Khayyám's words: "Let us

make up in the tavern for the time which we have wasted in the mosque." Or we find attractions in a poetry indifferent to them; in a poetry where the contents may be what they will, but where the form is studied and exquisite. We delude ourselves in either case; and the best cure for our delusion is to let our minds rest upon that great and inexhaustible word *life*, until we learn to enter into its meaning. A poetry of revolt against moral ideas is a poetry of revolt against *life*; a poetry of indifference towards moral ideas is a poetry of indifference towards *life*.

Epictetus had a happy figure for things like the play of the senses, or literary form and finish, or argumentative ingenuity, in comparison with "the best and master thing" for us, as he called it, the concern, how to live. Some people were afraid of them, he said, or they disliked and undervalued them. Such people were wrong; they were unthankful or cowardly. But the things might also be over-prized, and treated as final when they are not. They bear to life the relation which inns bear to home. "As if a man, journeying home, and finding a nice inn on the road, and liking it, were to stay forever at the inn! Man, thou hast forgotten thine object; thy journey was not to this, but *through* this. 'But this inn is taking.' And how many other inns, too, are taking, and how many fields and meadows! but as places of passage merely. You have an object, which is this: to get home, to do your duty to your family, friends, and fellow-countrymen, to attain inward freedom, serenity, happiness, contentment. Style takes your fancy, arguing takes your fancy, and you forget your home and want to make your abode with them and to stay with them, on the plea that they are taking. Who denies that they are taking? but as places of passage, as inns. And when I say this, you suppose me to be attacking the care for style, the care for argument. I am not; I attack the resting in them, the not looking to the end which is beyond them."

Now, when we come across a poet like Théophile Gautier, we have a poet who has taken up his abode at an inn, and never got farther. There may be inducements to this or that one of us, at this or that moment, to find delight in him, to cleave to him; but after all, we do not change the truth about him, — we only stay ourselves in his inn along with him. And when we come across a poet like Wordsworth, who sings

"Of truth, of grandeur, beauty, love and hope,
And melancholy fear subdued by faith,
Of blessed consolations in distress,
Of moral strength and intellectual power,
Of joy in widest commonalty spread —"

then we have a poet intent on "the best and master thing," and who prosecutes his journey home. We say, for brevity's sake, that he deals with *life*, because he deals with that in which life really consists. This is what Voltaire means to praise in the English poets, — this dealing with what is really life. But always it is the mark of the greatest poets that they deal with it; and to say that the English poets are remarkable for dealing with it, is only another way of saying, what is true, that in poetry the English genius has especially shown its power.

Wordsworth deals with it, and his greatness lies in his dealing with it so powerfully. I have named a number of celebrated poets above all of whom he, in my opinion, deserves to be placed. He is to be placed above poets like Voltaire, Dryden, Pope, Lessing, Schiller, because these famous personages, with a thousand gifts and merits, never, or scarcely ever, attain the distinctive accent and utterance of the high and genuine poets —

"Quique pii vates et Phœbo digna locuti,"¹

at all. Burns, Keats, Heine, not to speak of others in our list, have this accent; — who can doubt it? And at the same time they have treasures of humor, felicity, passion, for which in Wordsworth we shall look in vain. Where, then, is Wordsworth's superiority? It is here; he deals with more of *life* than they do; he deals with *life*, as a whole, more powerfully.

No Wordsworthian will doubt this. Nay, the fervent Wordsworthian will add, as Mr. Leslie Stephen does, that Wordsworth's poetry is precious because his philosophy is sound; that his "ethical system is as distinctive and capable of exposition as Bishop Butler's"; that his poetry is informed by ideas which "fall spontaneously into a scientific system of thought." But we must be on our guard against the Wordsworthians, if we want to secure for Wordsworth his due rank as a poet. The Wordsworthians are apt to praise him for the wrong things, and to lay far too much stress upon what they call his philosophy. His poetry is the reality, his philosophy — so far, at least, as it

¹ *The Recluse*, II, 767-71.

² Blessed poets named worthy of Apollo. *Aeneid*, vi, 662.

may put on the form and habit of "a scientific system of thought," and the more that it puts them on — is the illusion. Perhaps we shall one day learn to make this proposition general, and to say: Poetry is the reality, philosophy the illusion. But in Wordsworth's case, at any rate, we cannot do him justice until we dismiss his formal philosophy.

The Excursion abounds with philosophy and therefore *The Excursion* is to the Wordsworthian what it never can be to the disinterested lover of poetry, — a satisfactory work. "Duty exists," says Wordsworth, in *The Excursion*; and then he proceeds thus —

"... Immutably survive,
For our support, the measures and the forms,
Which an abstract Intelligence supplies,
Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not."¹

And the Wordsworthian is delighted, and thinks that here is a sweet union of philosophy and poetry. But the disinterested lover of poetry will feel that the lines carry us really not a step farther than the proposition which they would interpret; that they are a tissue of elevated but abstract verbiage, alien to the very nature of poetry.

Or let us come direct to the centre of Wordsworth's philosophy, as "an ethical system, as distinctive and capable of systematic exposition as Bishop Butler's" —

"... One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists, one only; — an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good."²

That is doctrine such as we hear in church too, religious and philosophic doctrine; and the attached Wordsworthian loves passages of such doctrine, and brings them forward in proof of his poet's excellence. But however true the doctrine may be, it has, as here presented, none of the characters of *poetic* truth, the kind of truth which we require from a poet, and in which Wordsworth is really strong.

Even the "intimations" of the famous Ode, those corner-stones of the supposed philosophic system of Wordsworth, — the idea of the high instincts and affections coming out in childhood, testifying of a divine home recently left, and fading away as our life proceeds, — this idea, of undeniable

beauty as a play of fancy, has itself not the character of poetic truth of the best kind; it has no real solidity. The instinct of delight in Nature and her beauty had no doubt extraordinary strength in Wordsworth himself as a child. But to say that universally this instinct is mighty in childhood, and tends to die away afterwards, is to say what is extremely doubtful. In many people, perhaps with the majority of educated persons, the love of nature is nearly imperceptible at ten years old, but strong and operative at thirty. In general we may say of these high instincts of early childhood, the base of the alleged systematic philosophy of Wordsworth, what Thucydides says of the early achievements of the Greek race: "It is impossible to speak with certainty of what is so remote; but from all that we can really investigate, I should say that they were no very great things."

Finally, the "scientific system of thought" in Wordsworth gives us at least such poetry as this, which the devout Wordsworthian accepts —

"O for the coming of that glorious time
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best protection, this Imperial Realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation, on her part, to teach
Them who are born to serve her and obey;
Binding herself by statute to secure,
For all the children whom her soil maintains,
The rudiments of letters, and inform
The mind with moral and religious truth."³

Wordsworth calls Voltaire dull, and surely the production of these un-Voltairian lines must have been imposed on him as a judgment! One can hear them being quoted at a Social Science Congress; one can call up the whole scene. A great room in one of our dismal provincial towns; dusty air and jaded afternoon daylight; benches full of men with bald heads and women in spectacles; an orator lifting up his face from a manuscript written within and without to declaim these lines of Wordsworth; and in the soul of any poor child of nature who may have wandered in thither, an unutterable sense of lamentation, and mourning, and woe!

"But turn we," as Wordsworth says, "from these bold, bad men," the haunters of Social Science Congresses. And let us be on our guard, too, against the exhibitors and extollers of a "scientific system of thought" in Wordsworth's poetry. The poetry will never be seen aright while they thus exhibit

¹ *The Excursion*, IV, 73-76.

² *Ibid.*, II, 10-17.

³ *The Excursion*, IX, 293-302.

it. The cause of its greatness is simple, and may be told quite simply. Wordsworth's poetry is great because of the extraordinary power with which Wordsworth feels the joy offered to us in nature, the joy offered to us in the simple primary affections and duties; and because of the extraordinary power with which, in case after case, he shows us this joy, and renders it so as to make us share it.

The source of joy from which he thus draws is the truest and most unfailing source of joy accessible to man. It is also accessible universally. Wordsworth brings us word, therefore, according to his own strong and characteristic line, he brings us word

"Of joy in widest commonalty spread."

Here is an immense advantage for a poet. Wordsworth tells of what all seek, and tells of it at its truest and best source, and yet a source where all may go and draw for it.

Nevertheless, we are not to suppose that everything is precious which Wordsworth, standing even at this perennial and beautiful source, may give us. Wordsworthians are apt to talk as if it must be. They will speak with the same reverence of *The Sailor's Mother*, for example, as of *Lucy Gray*. They do their master harm by such lack of discrimination. *Lucy Gray* is a beautiful success; *The Sailor's Mother* is a failure. To give aright what he wishes to give, to interpret and render successfully, is not always within Wordsworth's own command. It is within no poet's command; here is the part of the Muse, the inspiration, the God, the "not ourselves."¹ In Wordsworth's case, the accident, for so it may almost be called, of inspiration, is of peculiar importance. No poet, perhaps, is so evidently filled with a new and sacred energy when the inspiration is upon him; no poet, when it fails him, is so left "weak as is a breaking wave." I remember hearing him say that "Goethe's poetry was not inevitable enough." The remark is striking and true; no line in Goethe, as Goethe said himself, but its maker knew well how it came there. Wordsworth is right, Goethe's poetry is not inevitable; not inevitable enough. But Wordsworth's poetry, when he is at his best, is inevitable, as inevitable as Nature herself. It might seem that Nature not only gave him the matter for his poem, but wrote his poem for him. He has no style. He was too con-

versant with Milton not to catch at times his master's manner, and he has fine Miltonic lines; but he has no assured poetic style of his own, like Milton. When he seeks to have a style he falls into ponderosity and pomposity. In *The Excursion* we have his style, as an artistic product of his own creation; and although Jeffrey completely failed to recognize Wordsworth's real greatness, he was yet not wrong in saying of *The Excursion*, as a work of poetic style: "This will never do."² And yet magical as is that power, which Wordsworth has not, of assured and possessed poetic style, he has something which is an equivalent for it.

Every one who has any sense for these things feels the subtle turn, the heightening, which is given to a poet's verse by his genius for style. We can feel it in the

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well" —

of Shakespeare; in the

"... though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues" —

of Milton. It is the incomparable charm of Milton's power of poetic style which gives such worth to *Paradise Regained*, and makes a great poem of a work in which Milton's imagination does not soar high. Wordsworth has in constant possession, and at command, no style of this kind; but he had too poetic a nature, and had read the great poets too well, not to catch, as I have already remarked, something of it occasionally. We find it not only in his Miltonic lines; we find it in such a phrase as this, where the manner is his own, not Milton's —

"the fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow barricadoed evermore
Within the walls of cities;"²

although even here, perhaps, the power of style which is undeniable, is more properly that of eloquent prose than the subtle heightening and change wrought by genuine poetic style. It is style, again, and the elevation given by style, which chiefly makes the effectiveness of *Laodameia*. Still the right sort of verse to choose from Wordsworth, if we are to seize his true and most characteristic form of expression, is a line like this from *Michael* —

"And never lifted up a single stone."

¹ Arnold's definition of God was "the enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." *Literature and Dogma*, chap. 1.

² In his famous criticism of *The Excursion*, in the *Edinburgh Review*, November, 1814.

² *The Recluse*, I, 831.

There is nothing subtle in it, no heightening, no study of poetic style, strictly so called, at all; yet it is expression of the highest and most truly expressive kind.

Wordsworth owed much to Burns, and a style of perfect plainness, relying for effect solely on the weight and force of that which with entire fidelity it utters, Burns could show him.

"The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low
And stained his name."

Every one will be conscious of a likeness here to Wordsworth; and if Wordsworth did great things with this nobly plain manner, we must remember, what indeed he himself would always have been forward to acknowledge, that Burns used it before him.

Still Wordsworth's use of it has something unique and unmatched. Nature herself seems, I say, to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power. This arises from two causes; from the profound sincerity with which Wordsworth feels his subject, and also from the profoundly sincere and natural character of his subject itself. He can and will treat such a subject with nothing but the most plain, first-hand, almost austere naturalness. His expression may often be called bald, as, for instance, in the poem of *Resolution and Independence*; but it is bald as the bare mountain tops are bald, with a baldness which is full of grandeur.

Wherever we meet with the successful balance, in Wordsworth, of profound truth of subject with profound truth of execution, he is unique. His best poems are those which most perfectly exhibit this balance. I have a warm admiration for *Laodameia* and for the great *Ode*; but if I am to tell the very truth, I find *Laodameia* not wholly free from something artificial, and the great *Ode* not wholly free from something declamatory. If I had to pick out poems of a kind most perfectly to show Wordsworth's unique power, I should rather choose poems such as *Michael*, *The Fountain*, *The Highland Reaper*. And poems with the peculiar and unique beauty which distinguishes these, Wordsworth produced in considerable number; besides very many other poems of which the worth, although not so rare as the worth of these, is still exceedingly high.

On the whole, then, as I said at the beginning, not only is Wordsworth eminent by reason of the goodness of his best work, but he is eminent also by reason of the great body of good work which he has left to us. With the ancients I will not compare him. In many respects the ancients are far above us, and yet there is something that we demand which they can never give. Leaving the ancients, let us come to the poets and poetry of Christendom. Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, Milton, Goethe, are altogether larger and more splendid luminaries in the poetical heaven than Wordsworth. But I know not where else, among the moderns, we are to find his superiors.

To disengage the poems which show his power, and to present them to the English-speaking public and to the world, is the object of this volume. I by no means say that it contains all which in Wordsworth's poems is interesting. Except in the case of *Margaret*, a story composed separately from the rest of *The Excursion*, and which belongs to a different part of England, I have not ventured on detaching portions of poems, or on giving any piece otherwise than as Wordsworth himself gave it. But under the conditions imposed by this reserve, the volume contains, I think, everything, or nearly everything, which may best serve him with the majority of lovers of poetry, nothing which may disserve him.

I have spoken lightly of Wordsworthians; and if we are to get Wordsworth recognized by the public and by the world, we must recommend him not in the spirit of a clique, but in the spirit of disinterested lovers of poetry. But I am a Wordsworthian myself. I can read with pleasure and edification *Peter Bell*, and the whole series of *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, and the address to Mr. Wilkinson's spade, and even the *Thanksgiving Ode*; — everything of Wordsworth, I think, except *Vaudracour and Julia*. It is not for nothing that one has been brought up in the veneration of a man so truly worthy of homage; that one has seen him and heard him, lived in his neighborhood, and been familiar with his country. No Wordsworthian has a tenderer affection for this pure and sage master than I, or is less really offended by his defects. But Wordsworth is something more than the pure and sage master of a small band of devoted followers, and we ought not to rest satisfied until he is seen to be what he is. He is one of the very chief glories of English Poetry; and by nothing is

England so glorious as by her poetry. Let us lay aside every weight which hinders our getting him recognized as this, and let our one study be to bring to pass, as widely as possible and as truly as possible, his own word concerning his poems: "They will coöperate with the benign tendencies in human nature and society, and will, in their degree, be efficacious in making men wiser, better, and happier."

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY (1825-1895)

Thomas Henry Huxley was born at Ealing, May 4, 1825. His education was distinctly scientific. He took a degree in medicine at London University in 1845, and was appointed assistant surgeon in the Royal Navy. He was for four years attached to a scientific expedition to the South Seas in the *Rattlesnake*. On his return he was appointed lecturer in natural history at the School of Mines. In 1859 Darwin published his *Origin of Species*, and Huxley at once became an ardent defender of the doctrine of evolution. He wrote in his Autobiography: "I am afraid there is very little of the genuine naturalist in me . . . what I cared for was the architectural and engineering part of the business." It was as a general that he developed the campaign to give his generation an idea of the importance of science in human life, and particularly to make the theory of evolution a part of current thought. He filled many positions and received many honors. In 1876 he visited the United States to deliver the inaugural address at the opening of Johns Hopkins University. He died in 1895.

Huxley is the best representative in English literature of the importance of science and the scientific habit of mind as it affects style. As lecturer and essayist he was a missionary, fighting for a cause not yet won, and a brilliant controversialist. He touched on many aspects of the scientific revolution, the influence of scientific concepts on ethics, education, government, and religion. His essays are published in nine volumes (1893-94). Convenient selections are found in Everyman's Library, under the headings, *Man's Place in Nature* and *Lay Sermons*. His *Life and Letters*, by Leonard H. Huxley, appeared in 1900. There are criticisms in Leslie Stephen's *Studies of a Biographer*, and J. G. Schurman's *Agnosticism and Religion*.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1889

And when I consider, in one view, the many things . . . which I have upon my hands, I feel the burlesque of being employed in this manner at my time of life. But, in another view, and taking in all circumstances, these things, as trifling as they may appear, no less than things of greater importance, seem to be put upon me to do.

BISHOP BUTLER to the DUCHESS OF SOMERSET

The "many things" to which the Duchess's correspondent here refers are the repairs and improvements of the episcopal seat at Auckland. I doubt if the great apologist, greater in nothing than in the simple dignity of his character, would have considered the writing an account of himself as a thing which could be put upon him to do whatever circumstances might be taken in. But the good bishop lived in an age when a man might write books and yet be permitted to keep his private existence to himself; in the pre-Boswellian epoch, when the germ of the photographer lay concealed in the distant future, and the interviewer who pervades our age was an unforeseen, indeed unimaginable, birth of time.

At present, the most convinced believer in the aphorism "*Bene qui latuit, bene visit*,"¹ is not always able to act up to it. An im-

¹ "He who has well concealed himself has well lived."

portunate person informs him that his portrait is about to be published and will be accompanied by a biography which the importunate person proposes to write. The sufferer knows what that means; either he undertakes to revise the "biography" or he does not. In the former case, he makes himself responsible; in the latter, he allows the publication of a mass of more or less fulsome inaccuracies for which he will be held responsible by those who are familiar with the prevalent art of self-advertisement. On the whole, it may be better to get over the "burlesque of being employed in this manner" and do the thing himself.

It was by reflections of this kind that, some years ago, I was led to write and permit the publication of the subjoined sketch.

I was born about eight o'clock in the morning on the 4th of May, 1825, at Ealing, which was, at that time, as quiet a little country village as could be found within half-a-dozen miles of Hyde Park Corner. Now it is a suburb of London with, I believe, 30,000 inhabitants. My father was one of the masters in a large semi-public school which at one time had a high reputation. I am not aware that any portents preceded my

arrival in this world, but, in my childhood, I remember hearing a traditional account of the manner in which I lost the chance of an endowment of great practical value. The windows of my mother's room were open, in consequence of the unusual warmth of the weather. For the same reason, probably, a neighboring beehive had swarmed, and the new colony, pitching on the window-sill, was making its way into the room when the horrified nurse shut down the sash. If that well-meaning woman had only abstained from her ill-timed interference, the swarm might have settled on my lips, and I should have been endowed with that mellifluous eloquence which, in this country, leads far more surely than worth, capacity, or honest work, to the highest places in Church and State. But the opportunity was lost, and I have been obliged to content myself through life with saying what I mean in the plainest of plain language, than which, I suppose, there is no habit more ruinous to a man's prospects of advancement.

Why I was christened Thomas Henry I do not know; but it is a curious chance that my parents should have fixed for my usual denomination upon the name of that particular Apostle with whom I have always felt most sympathy.¹ Physically and mentally I am the son of my mother so completely — even down to peculiar movements of the hands, which made their appearance in me as I reached the age she had when I noticed them — that I can hardly find any trace of my father in myself, except an inborn faculty for drawing, which unfortunately, in my case, has never been cultivated, a hot temper, and that amount of tenacity of purpose which unfriendly observers sometimes call obstinacy.

My mother was a slender brunette, of an emotional and energetic temperament, and possessed of the most piercing black eyes I ever saw in a woman's head. With no more education than other women of the middle classes in her day, she had an excellent mental capacity. Her most distinguishing characteristic, however, was rapidity of thought. If one ventured to suggest she had not taken much time to arrive at any conclusion, she would say, "I cannot help it, things flash across me." That peculiarity has been passed on to me in full strength; it has often stood me in good stead; it has sometimes played me sad tricks, and it has always been a danger. But, after all, if my time

were to come over again, there is nothing I would less willingly part with than my inheritance of mother wit.

I have next to nothing to say about my childhood. In later years my mother, looking at me almost reproachfully, would sometimes say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy!" whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks. In fact, I have a distinct recollection of certain curls of which I was vain, and of a conviction that I closely resembled that handsome, courtly gentleman, Sir Herbert Oakley, who was vicar of our parish, and who was as a god to us country folk, because he was occasionally visited by the then Prince George of Cambridge. I remember turning my pinafore wrong side forwards in order to represent a surplice, and preaching to my mother's maids in the kitchen as nearly as possible in Sir Herbert's manner, one Sunday morning when the rest of the family were at church. That is the earliest indication I can call to mind of the strong clerical affinities which my friend Mr. Herbert Spencer has always ascribed to me, though I fancy they have for the most part remained in a latent state.

My regular school training was of the briefest, perhaps fortunately, for though my way of life has made me acquainted with all sorts and conditions of men, from the highest to the lowest, I deliberately affirm that the society I fell into at school was the worst I have ever known. We boys were average lads, with much the same inherent capacity for good and evil as any others; but the people who were set over us cared about as much for our intellectual and moral welfare as if they were baby-farmers. We were left to the operation of the struggle for existence among ourselves, and bullying was the least of the ill practices current among us. Almost the only cheerful reminiscence in connection with the place which arises in my mind is that of a battle I had with one of my classmates who had bullied me until I could stand it no longer. I was a very slight lad, but there was a wild-cat element in me which, when roused, made up for lack of weight, and I licked my adversary effectually. However, one of my first experiences of the extremely rough-and-ready nature of justice, as exhibited by the course of things in general, arose out of the fact that I — the victor — had a black eye, while he — the vanquished — had none, so that I got into dis-

¹ See John XX, 24-25.

grace and he did not. We made it up, and thereafter I was unmolested. One of the greatest shocks I ever received in my life was to be told a dozen years afterwards by the groom who brought me my horse in a stable-yard in Sydney that he was my quondam antagonist. He had a long story of family misfortune to account for his position, but at that time it was necessary to deal very cautiously with mysterious strangers in New South Wales, and on inquiry I found that the unfortunate young man had not only been "sent out,"¹ but had undergone more than one colonial conviction.

As I grew older, my great desire was to be a mechanical engineer, but the fates were against this and, while very young, I commenced the study of medicine under a medical brother-in-law. But, though the Institute of Mechanical Engineers would certainly not own me, I am not sure that I have not all along been a sort of mechanical engineer *in partibus infidelium*.² I am now occasionally horrified to think how very little I ever knew or cared about medicine as the art of healing. The only part of my professional course which really and deeply interested me was physiology, which is the mechanical engineering of living machines; and, notwithstanding that natural science has been my proper business, I am afraid there is very little of the genuine naturalist in me. I never collected anything, and species work was always a burden to me; what I cared for was the architectural and engineering part of the business, the working out of the wonderful unity of plan in the thousands and thousands of diverse living constructions, and the modifications of similar apparatuses to serve diverse ends. The extraordinary attraction I felt towards the study of the intricacies of living structure nearly proved fatal to me at the outset. I was a mere boy — I think between thirteen and fourteen years of age — when I was taken by some older student friends of mine to the first *post mortem* examination I ever attended. All my life I have been most unfortunately sensitive to the disagreeables which attend anatomical pursuits, but on this occasion my curiosity overpowered all other feelings, and I spent two or three hours in gratifying it. I did not cut myself, and none of the ordinary symptoms of dissection-poison supervened, but poisoned I was somehow, and I remember sinking into a strange state of apathy.

By way of a last chance, I was sent to the care of some good, kind people, friends of my father's, who lived in a farmhouse in the heart of Warwickshire. I remember staggering from my bed to the window on the bright spring morning after my arrival, and throwing open the casement. Life seemed to come back on the wings of the breeze, and to this day the faint odor of wood-smoke, like that which floated across the farm-yard in the early morning, is as good to me as the "sweet south upon a bed of violets." I soon recovered, but for years I suffered from occasional paroxysms of internal pain, and from that time my constant friend, hypochondriacal dyspepsia, commenced his half century of co-tenancy of my fleshly tabernacle.

Looking back on my *Lehrjahre*,³ I am sorry to say that I do not think that any account of my doings as a student would tend to edification. In fact, I should distinctly warn ingenuous youth to avoid imitating my example. I worked extremely hard when it pleased me, and when it did not — which was a very frequent case — I was extremely idle (unless making caricatures of one's pastors and masters is to be called a branch of industry) — or else wasted my energies in wrong directions. I read everything I could lay hands upon, including novels, and took up all sorts of pursuits to drop them again quite as speedily. No doubt it was very largely my own fault, but the only instruction from which I ever obtained the proper effect of education was that which I received from Mr. Wharton Jones, who was the lecturer on physiology at the Charing Cross School of Medicine. The extent and precision of his knowledge impressed me greatly, and the severe exactness of his method of lecturing was quite to my taste. I do not know that I have ever felt so much respect for anybody as a teacher before or since. I worked hard to obtain his approbation, and he was extremely kind and helpful to the youngster who, I am afraid, took up more of his time than he had any right to do. It was he who suggested the publication of my first scientific paper — a very little one — in the *Medical Gazette* of 1845, and most kindly corrected the literary faults which abounded in it, short as it was; for at that time, and for many years afterwards, I detested the trouble of writing, and would take no pains over it.

It was in the early spring of 1846 that, having finished my obligatory medical

¹ exiled (under criminal sentence).
² in the land of the heathen.

³ student-years.

studies and passed the first M.D. examination at the London University, — though I was still too young to qualify at the College of Surgeons, — I was talking to a fellow-student (the present eminent physician, Sir Joseph Fayrer), and wondering what I should do to meet the imperative necessity for earning my own bread, when my friend suggested that I should write to Sir William Burnett, at that time Director-General for the Medical Service of the Navy, for an appointment. I thought this rather a strong thing to do, as Sir William was personally unknown to me, but my cheery friend would not listen to my scruples, so I went to my lodgings and wrote the best letter I could devise. A few days afterwards I received the usual official circular acknowledgment, but at the bottom there was written an instruction to call at Somerset House on such a day. I thought that looked like business, so at the appointed time I called and sent in my card, while I waited in Sir William's ante-room. He was a tall, shrewd-looking old gentleman, with a broad Scotch accent — and I think I see him now as he entered with my card in his hand. The first thing he did was to return it, with the frugal reminder that I should probably find it useful on some other occasion. The second was to ask whether I was an Irishman. I suppose the air of modesty about my appeal must have struck him. I satisfied the Director-General that I was English to the backbone, and he made some inquiries as to my student career, finally desiring me to hold myself ready for examination. Having passed this, I was in Her Majesty's Service, and entered on the books of Nelson's old ship, the *Victory*, for duty at Haslar Hospital, about a couple of months after I made my application.

My official chief at Haslar was a very remarkable person, the late Sir John Richardson, an excellent naturalist, and far-famed as an indomitable Arctic traveller. He was a silent, reserved man, outside the circle of his family and intimates; and, having a full share of youthful vanity, I was extremely disgusted to find that "Old John," as we irreverent youngsters called him, took not the slightest notice of my worshipful self either the first time I attended him, as it was my duty to do, or for some weeks afterwards. I am afraid to think of the lengths to which my tongue may have run on the subject of the churlishness of the chief, who was, in truth, one of the kindest-hearted and most considerate of men. But one day, as I was

crossing the hospital square, Sir John stopped me, and heaped coals of fire on my head by telling me that he had tried to get me one of the resident appointments, much coveted by the assistant surgeons, but that the Admiralty had put in another man. "However," said he, "I mean to keep you here till I can get you something you will like," and turned upon his heel without waiting for the thanks I stammered out. That explained how it was I had not been packed off to the West Coast of Africa, like some of my juniors, and why, eventually, I remained altogether seven months at Haslar.

After a long interval, during which "Old John" ignored my existence almost as completely as before, he stopped me again as we met in a casual way, and, describing the service on which the *Rattlesnake* was likely to be employed, said that Captain Owen Stanley, who was to command the ship, had asked him to recommend an assistant surgeon who knew something of science; would I like that? Of course I jumped at the offer. "Very well, I give you leave; go to London at once and see Captain Stanley." I went, saw my future commander, who was very civil to me, and promised to ask that I should be appointed to his ship, as in due time I was. It is a singular thing that, during the few months of my stay at Haslar, I had among my messmates two future Directors-General of the Medical Service of the Navy (Sir Alexander Armstrong and Sir John Watt-Reid), with the present President of the College of Physicians and my kindest of doctors, Sir Andrew Clark.

Life on board Her Majesty's ship in those days was a very different affair from what it is now, and ours was exceptionally rough, as we were often many months without receiving letters or seeing any civilized people but ourselves. In exchange, we had the interest of being about the last voyagers, I suppose, to whom it could be possible to meet with people who knew nothing of fire-arms — as we did on the south coast of New Guinea — and of making acquaintance with a variety of interesting savage and semi-civilized people. But, apart from experience of this kind and the opportunities offered for scientific work, to me, personally, the cruise was extremely valuable. It was good for me to live under sharp discipline; to be down on the realities of existence by living on bare necessities; to find out how extremely well worth living life seemed to be when one woke up from a night's rest on a soft plank, with

the sky for canopy and cocoa and weevilly biscuit the sole prospect for breakfast; and, more especially, to learn to work for the sake of what I got for myself out of it, even if it all went to the bottom and I along with it. My brother officers were as good fellows as sailors ought to be and generally are, but, naturally, they neither knew nor cared anything about my pursuits, nor understood why I should be so zealous in pursuit of the objects which my friends, the middies, christened "Buffons," after the title conspicuous on a volume of the *Suites à Buffon*,¹ which stood on my shelf in the chart room.

During the four years of our absence, I sent home communication after communication to the "Linnean Society," with the same result as that obtained by Noah when he sent the raven out of his ark. Tired at last of hearing nothing about them, I determined to do or die, and in 1849 I drew up a more elaborate paper and forwarded it to the Royal Society. This was my dove, if I had only known it. But owing to the movements of the ship, I heard nothing of that either until my return to England in the latter end of the year 1850, when I found that it was printed and published, and that a huge packet of separate copies awaited me. When I hear some of my young friends complain of want of sympathy and encouragement, I am inclined to think that my naval life was not the least valuable part of my education.

Three years after my return were occupied by a battle between my scientific friends on the one hand and the Admiralty on the other, as to whether the latter ought, or ought not, to act up to the spirit of a pledge they had given to encourage officers who had done scientific work by contributing to the expense of publishing mine. At last the Admiralty, getting tired, I suppose, cut short the discussion by ordering me to join a ship, which thing I declined to do, and as Rastignac, in the *Père Goriot* says to Paris, I said to London, "*à nous deux*."² I desired to obtain a Professorship of either Physiology or Comparative Anatomy, and as vacancies occurred I applied, but in vain. My friend, Professor Tyndall, and I were candidates at the same time, he for the Chair of Physics, and I for that of Natural History in the University of Toronto, which, fortunately, as it turned out, would not look at either of us. I say fortunately, not from any lack of respect for Toronto, but because I soon made

up my mind that London was the place for me, and hence I have steadily declined the inducements to leave it, which have at various times been offered. At last, in 1854, on the translation of my warm friend Edward Forbes, to Edinburgh, Sir Henry de la Beche, the Director-General of the Geological Survey, offered me the post Forbes vacated of Paleontologist and Lecturer on Natural History. I refused the former point blank, and accepted the latter only provisionally, telling Sir Henry that I did not care for fossils, and that I should give up Natural History as soon as I could get a physiological post. But I held the office for thirty-one years, and a large part of my work has been paleontological.

At that time I disliked public speaking, and had a firm conviction that I should break down every time I opened my mouth. I believe I had every fault a speaker could have (except talking at random or indulging in rhetoric), when I spoke to the first important audience I ever addressed, on a Friday evening at the Royal Institution, in 1852. Yet, I must confess to having been guilty, *malgré moi*,³ of as much public speaking as most of my contemporaries, and for the last ten years it ceased to be so much of a bugbear to me. I used to pity myself for having to go through this training, but I am now more disposed to compassionate the unfortunate audiences, especially my ever friendly hearers at the Royal Institution, who were the subjects of my oratorical experiments.

The last thing that it would be proper for me to do would be to speak of the work of my life, or to say at the end of the day whether I think I have earned my wages or not. Men are said to be partial judges of themselves. Young men may be, I doubt if old men are. Life seems terribly shortened as they look back, and the mountain they set themselves to climb in youth turns out to be a mere spur of immeasurably higher ranges when, by failing breath, they reach the top. But if I may speak of the objects I have had more or less definitely in view since I began the ascent of my hillock, they are briefly these: To promote the increase of natural knowledge and to forward the application of scientific methods of investigation to all the problems of life to the best of my ability, in the conviction which has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, that there is no alleviation

¹ Supplements to Buffon (the naturalist).

² "We have a score to settle."

³ in spite of myself.

for the sufferings of mankind except veracity of thought and of action, and the resolute facing of the world as it is when the garment of make-believe by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features is stripped off.

It is with this intent that I have subordinated any reasonable, or unreasonable, ambition for scientific fame which I may have permitted myself to entertain to other ends; to the popularization of science; to the development and organization of scientific education; to the endless series of battles and skirmishes over evolution; and to untiring opposition to that ecclesiastical spirit, that clericalism, which in England, as everywhere else, and to whatever denomination it may belong, is the deadly enemy of science.

In striving for the attainment of these objects, I have been but one among many, and I shall be well content to be remembered, or even not remembered, as such. Circumstances, among which I am proud to reckon the devoted kindness of many friends, have led to my occupation of various prominent positions, among which the Presidency of the Royal Society is the highest. It would be mock modesty on my part, with these and other scientific honors which have been bestowed upon me, to pretend that I have not succeeded in the career which I have followed, rather because I was driven into it than of my own free will; but I am afraid I should not count even these things as marks of success if I could not hope that I had somewhat helped that movement of opinion which has been called the New Reformation.

ON THE ADVISABLENESS OF IMPROVING NATURAL KNOWLEDGE

1866

A lay sermon, delivered at St. Martin's Hall, on Sunday, January 7, 1866. Published in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. Huxley's view of the importance of "Natural Knowledge" may be compared with Macaulay's in his *Essay on Bacon*.

This time two hundred years ago — in the beginning of January, 1666 — those of our forefathers who inhabited this great and ancient city, took breath between the shocks of two fearful calamities, one not quite past, although its fury had abated; the other to come.

Within a few yards of the very spot on which we are assembled, so the tradition runs, that painful and deadly malady, the

plague, appeared in the latter months of 1664; and, though no new visitor, smote the people of England, and especially of her capital, with a violence unknown before, in the course of the following year. The hand of a master has pictured what happened in those dismal months; and in that truest of fictions, *The History of the Plague Year*, Defoe shows death, with every accompaniment of pain and terror, stalking through the narrow streets of old London, and changing their busy hum into a silence broken only by the wailing of the mourners of fifty thousand dead; by the woeful denunciations and mad prayers of fanatics; and by the madder yells of despairing profligates.

But, about this time in 1666, the death rate had sunk to nearly its ordinary amount; a case of plague occurred only here and there, and the richer citizens who had flown from the pest had returned to their dwellings. The remnant of the people began to toil at the accustomed round of duty, or of pleasure; and the stream of city life bid fair to flow back along its old bed, with renewed and uninterrupted vigor.

The newly kindled hope was deceitful. The great plague, indeed, returned no more; but what it had done for the Londoners, the great fire, which broke out in the autumn of 1666, did for London; and, in September of that year, a heap of ashes and the indestructible energy of the people were all that remained of the glory of five sixths of the city within the walls.

Our forefathers had their own ways of accounting for each of these calamities. They submitted to the plague in humility and in penitence, for they believed it to be the judgment of God. But towards the fire they were furiously indignant, interpreting it as the effect of the malice of man — as the work of the Republicans, or of the Papists, according as their prepossessions ran in favor of loyalty or of Puritanism.

It would, I fancy, have fared but ill with one who, standing where I now stand, in what was then a thickly-peopled and fashionable part of London, should have broached to our ancestors the doctrine which I now propound to you — that all their hypotheses were alike wrong; that the plague was no more, in their sense, a Divine judgment, than the fire was the work of any political, or of any religious, sect; but that they were themselves the authors of both plague and fire, and that they must look to themselves

to prevent the recurrence of calamities, to all appearance so peculiarly beyond the reach of human control — so evidently the result of the wrath of God, or of the craft and subtlety of an enemy.

And one may picture to oneself how harmoniously the holy cursing of the Puritan of that day would have chimed in with the unholy cursing and the crackling wit of the Rochesters and Sedleys, and with the revilings of the political fanatics, if my imaginary plain dealer had gone on to say that, if the return of such misfortunes were ever rendered impossible, it would not be in virtue of the victory of the faith of Laud, or of that of Milton; and, as little, by the triumph of republicanism, as by that of monarchy. But that the one thing needful for compassing this end was, that the people of England should second the efforts of an insignificant corporation, the establishment of which, a few years before the epoch of the great plague and the great fire, had been as little noticed, as they were conspicuous.

Some twenty years before the outbreak of the plague a few calm and thoughtful students banded themselves together for the purpose, as they phrased it, of "improving natural knowledge." The ends they proposed to attain cannot be stated more clearly than in the words of one of the founders of the organization:

"Our business was (precluding matters of theology and state affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries, and such as related thereunto: as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Statics, Magneticks, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments; with the state of these studies and their cultivation at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the veins, the *venæ lacteæ*, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape (as it then appeared) of Saturn, the spots on the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes and grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities and nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian experiment

in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, with divers other things of like nature, some of which were then but new discoveries, and others not so generally known and embraced as now they are; with other things appertaining to what hath been called the New Philosophy, which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England."

The learned Dr. Wallis,¹ writing in 1696, narrates in these words, what happened half a century before, or about 1645. The associates met at Oxford, in the rooms of Dr. Wilkins, who was destined to become a bishop; and subsequently coming together in London, they attracted the notice of the king. And it is a strange evidence of the taste for knowledge which the most obviously worthless of the Stuarts shared with his father and grandfather, that Charles the Second was not content with saying witty things about his philosophers, but did wise things with regard to them. For he not only bestowed upon them such attention as he could spare from his poodles and his mistresses, but, being in his usual state of impecuniosity, begged for them of the Duke of Ormond; and, that step being without effect, gave them Chelsea College, a charter, and a mace: crowning his favors in the best way they could be crowned, by burdening them no further with royal patronage or state interference.

Thus it was that the half-dozen young men, studious of the "New Philosophy," who met in one another's lodgings in Oxford or in London, in the middle of the seventeenth century, grew in numerical and in real strength, until, in its latter part, the "Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge" had already become famous, and had acquired a claim upon the veneration of Englishmen, which it has ever since retained, as the principal focus of scientific activity in our islands, and the chief champion of the cause it was formed to support.

It was by the aid of the Royal Society that Newton published his *Principia*. If all the books in the world, except the *Philosophical Transactions*, were destroyed, it is safe to say that the foundations of physical science would remain unshaken, and that the vast intellectual progress of the last two centuries

¹ The experiment of Torricelli (1608-1647) in which he produced a vacuum by the contraction of mercury in a sealed tube.

¹ John Wallis (1616-1703), Professor of Mathematics at Oxford.

would be largely, though incompletely, recorded. Nor have any signs of halting or of decrepitude manifested themselves in our own times. As in Dr. Wallis's days, so in these, "our business is, precluding theology and state affairs, to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries." But our "Mathematick" is one which Newton would have to go to school to learn; our "Statics, Mechanicks, Magneticks, Chymicks, and Natural Experiments" constitute a mass of physical and chemical knowledge, a glimpse at which would compensate Galileo for the doings of a score of inquisitorial cardinals; our "Physick" and "Anatomy" have embraced such infinite varieties of being, have laid open such new worlds in time and space, have grappled, not unsuccessfully, with such complex problems, that the eyes of Vesalius and of Harvey might be dazzled by the sight of the tree that has grown out of their grain of mustard seed.

The fact is perhaps rather too much, than too little, forced upon one's notice, nowadays, that all this marvellous intellectual growth has a no less wonderful expression in practical life; and that, in this respect, if in no other, the movement symbolized by the progress of the Royal Society stands without a parallel in the history of mankind.

A series of volumes as bulky as the *Transactions* of the Royal Society might possibly be filled with the subtle speculations of the schoolmen; not improbably, the obtaining a mastery over the products of mediæval thought might necessitate an even greater expenditure of time and of energy than the acquirement of the "New Philosophy"; but though such work engrossed the best intellects of Europe for a longer time than has elapsed since the great fire, its effects were "writ in water," so far as our social state is concerned.

On the other hand, if the noble first President of the Royal Society could revisit the upper air and once more gladden his eyes with a sight of the familiar mace, he would find himself in the midst of a material civilization more different from that of his day, than that of the seventeenth, was from that of the first, century. And if Lord Brouncker's¹ native sagacity had not deserted his ghost, he would need no long reflection to discover that all these ships, these railways, these telegraphs, these factories, these print-

ing presses, without which the whole fabric of modern English society would collapse into a mass of stagnant and starving pauperism — that all these pillars of our State are but the ripples and the bubbles upon the surface of that great spiritual stream, the springs of which, only, he and his fellows were privileged to see; and seeing, to recognize as that which it behoved them above all things to keep pure and undefiled.

It may, not be too great a flight of imagination to conceive our noble *revenant*² not forgetful of the great troubles of his own day, and anxious to know how often London had been burned down since his time, and how often the plague had carried off its thousands. He would have to learn that, although London contains tenfold the inflammable matter that it did in 1666; though, not content with filling our rooms with wood-work and light draperies, we must needs lead inflammable and explosive gases into every corner of our streets and houses, we never allow even a street to burn down. And if he asked how this had come about, we should have to explain that the improvement of natural knowledge has furnished us with dozens of machines for throwing water upon fires, any one of which would have furnished the ingenious Mr. Hooke, the first "curator and experimenter" of the Royal Society, with ample materials for discourse before half a dozen meetings of that body; and that, to say truth, except for the progress of natural knowledge, we should not have been able to make even the tools by which these machines are constructed. And, further, it would be necessary to add, that although severe fires sometimes occur and inflict great damage, the loss is very generally compensated by societies, the operations of which have been rendered possible only by the progress of natural knowledge in the direction of mathematics, and the accumulation of wealth in virtue of other natural knowledge.

But the plague? My Lord Brouncker's observation would not, I fear, lead him to think that Englishmen of the nineteenth century are purer in life, or more fervent in religious faith, than the generation which could produce a Boyle, an Evelyn, and a Milton. He might find the mud of society at the bottom instead of at the top, but I fear that the sum total would be as deserving of swift judgment as at the time of the Restoration. And it would be our duty to explain

¹ William Viscount Brouncker, first president of the Royal Society.

² ghost.

once more, and this time not without shame, that we have no reason to believe that it is the improvement of our faith, nor that of our morals, which keeps the plague from our city; but, again, that it is the improvement of our natural knowledge.

We have learned that pestilences will only take up their abode among those who have prepared unswept and ungarnished residences for them. Their cities must have narrow, unwatered streets, foul with accumulated garbage. Their houses must be ill-drained, ill-lighted, ill-ventilated. Their subjects must be ill-washed, ill-fed, ill-clothed. The London of 1665 was such a city. The cities of the East, where plague has an enduring dwelling, are such cities. We, in later times, have learned somewhat of nature, and partly obey her. Because of this partial improvement of our natural knowledge and of that fractional obedience, we have no plague; because that knowledge is still very imperfect and that obedience yet incomplete, typhus is our companion and cholera our visitor; but it is not presumptuous to express the belief that, when our knowledge is more complete and our obedience the expression of our knowledge, London will count her centuries of freedom from typhus and cholera, as she now gratefully reckons her two hundred years of ignorance of that plague, which swooped upon her thrice in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Surely, there is nothing in these explanations which is not fully borne out by the facts? Surely, the principles involved in them are now admitted among the fixed beliefs of all thinking men? Surely, it is true that our countrymen are less subject to fire, famine, pestilence, and all the evils which result from a want of command over and due anticipation of the course of nature, than were the countrymen of Milton; and health, wealth, and well-being are more abundant with us than with them? But no less certainly is the difference due to the improvement of our knowledge of nature, and the extent to which that improved knowledge has been incorporated with the household words of men, and has supplied the springs of their daily actions.

Granting for a moment, then, the truth of that which the depreciators of natural knowledge are so fond of urging, that its improvement can only add to the resources of our material civilization; admitting it to be possible that the founders of the Royal Society themselves looked for no other reward than

this, I cannot confess that I was guilty of exaggeration when I hinted, that to him who had the gift of distinguishing between prominent events and important events, the origin of a combined effort on the part of mankind to improve natural knowledge might have loomed larger than the Plague and have outshone the glare of the Fire; as a something fraught with a wealth of beneficence to mankind, in comparison with which the damage done by those ghastly evils would shrink into insignificance.

It is very certain that for every victim slain by the plague, hundreds of mankind exist and find a fair share of happiness in the world by the aid of the spinning jenny. And the great fire, at its worst, could not have burned the supply of coal, the daily working of which, in the bowels of the earth, made possible by the steam pump, gives rise to an amount of wealth to which the millions lost in old London are but as an old song.

But spinning jenny and steam pump are, after all, but toys, possessing an accidental value; and natural knowledge creates multitudes of more subtle contrivances, the praises of which do not happen to be sung because they are not directly convertible into instruments for creating wealth. When I contemplate natural knowledge squandering such gifts among men, the only appropriate comparison I can find for her is, to liken her to such a peasant woman as one sees in the Alps, striding ever upward, heavily burdened, and with mind bent only on her home; but yet, without effort and without thought, knitting for her children. Now stockings are good and comfortable things, and the children will undoubtedly be much the better for them; but surely it would be short-sighted, to say the least of it, to depreciate this toiling mother as a mere stocking-machine—a mere provider of physical comforts?

However, there are blind leaders of the blind, and not a few of them, who take this view of natural knowledge, and can see nothing in the bountiful mother of humanity but a sort of comfort-grinding machine. According to them, the improvement of natural knowledge always has been, and always must be, synonymous with no more than the improvement of the material resources and the increase of the gratifications of men.

Natural knowledge is, in their eyes, no real mother of mankind, bringing them up

with kindness, and, if need be, with sternness, in the way they should go, and instructing them in all things needful for their welfare; but a sort of fairy god-mother, ready to furnish her pets with shoes of swiftness, swords of sharpness, and omnipotent Aladdin's lamps, so that they may have telegraphs to Saturn, and see the other side of the moon, and thank God they are better than their benighted ancestors.

If this talk were true, I, for one, should not greatly care to toil in the service of natural knowledge. I think I would just as soon be quietly chipping my own flint axe, after the manner of my forefathers a few thousand years back, as be troubled with the endless malady of thought which now infests us all, for such reward. But I venture to say that such views are contrary alike to reason and to fact. Those who discourse in such fashion seem to me to be so intent upon trying to see what is above nature, or what is behind her, that they are blind to what stares them in the face, in her.

I should not venture to speak thus strongly if my justification were not to be found in the simplest and most obvious facts—if it needed more than an appeal to the most notorious truths to justify my assertion, that the improvement of natural knowledge, whatever direction it has taken, and however low the aims of those who may have commenced it—has not only conferred practical benefits on men, but, in so doing, has effected a revolution in their conceptions of the universe and of themselves, and has profoundly altered their modes of thinking and their views of right and wrong. I say that natural knowledge, seeking to satisfy natural wants, has found the ideas which can alone still spiritual cravings. I say that natural knowledge, in desiring to ascertain the laws of comfort, has been driven to discover those of conduct, and to lay the foundations of a new morality.

Let us take these points separately; and, first, what great ideas has natural knowledge introduced into men's minds?

I cannot but think that the foundations of all natural knowledge were laid when the reason of man first came face to face with the facts of nature; when the savage first learned that the fingers of one hand are fewer than those of both; that it is shorter to cross a stream than to head it; that a stone stops where it is unless it be moved, and that it drops from the hand which lets it go; that

light and heat come and go with the sun; that sticks burn away in a fire; that plants and animals grow and die; that if he struck his fellow savage a blow he would make him angry, and perhaps get a blow in return; while if he offered him a fruit he would please him, and perhaps receive a fish in exchange. When men had acquired this much knowledge, the outlines, rude though they were, of mathematics, of physics, of chemistry, of biology, of moral, economical, and political science, were sketched. Nor did the germ of religion fail when science began to bud. Listen to words which, though new, are yet three thousand years old:

"... When in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart."

But if the half-savage Greek could share our feelings thus far, it is irrational to doubt that he went further, to find, as we do, that upon that brief gladness there follows a certain sorrow—the little light of awakened human intelligence shines so mere a spark amidst the abyss of the unknown and unknowable; seems so insufficient to do more than illuminate the imperfections that cannot be remedied, the aspirations that cannot be realized, of man's own nature. But in this sadness, this consciousness of the limitation of man, this sense of an open secret which he cannot penetrate, lies the essence of all religion; and the attempt to embody it in the forms furnished by the intellect is the origin of the higher theologies.

Thus it seems impossible to imagine but that the foundations of all knowledge—secular or sacred—were laid when intelligence dawned, though the superstructure remained for long ages so slight and feeble as to be compatible with the existence of almost any general view respecting the mode of governance of the universe. No doubt, from the first, there were certain phenomena which, to the rudest mind, presented a constancy of occurrence, and suggested that a fixed order ruled, among them at any rate. I doubt if the grossest of Fetish worshipers ever imagined that a stone must have a god within it to make it fall, or that a fruit had a god within it to make it taste sweet. With regard to such matters as these, it is hardly

I Need it be said that this is Tennyson's English for Homer's Greek? (Huxley's note.)

questionable that mankind from the first took strictly positive and scientific views.

But, with respect to all the less familiar occurrences which present themselves, uncultured man, no doubt, has always taken himself as the standard of comparison, as the centre and measure of the world; nor could he well avoid doing so. And finding that his apparently uncaused will has a powerful effect in giving rise to many occurrences, he naturally enough ascribed other and greater events to other and greater volitions, and came to look upon the world and all that therein is, as the product of the volitions of persons like himself, but stronger, and capable of being appeased or angered, as he himself might be soothed or irritated. Through such conceptions of the plan and working of the universe all mankind have passed, or are passing. And we may now consider what has been the effect of the improvement of natural knowledge on the views of men who have reached this stage, and who have begun to cultivate natural knowledge with no desire but that of "increasing God's honor and bettering man's estate."

For example: what could seem wiser, from a mere material point of view, more innocent from a theological one, to an ancient people, than that they should learn the exact succession of the seasons, as warnings for their husbandmen; or the position of the stars, as guides to their rude navigators? But what has grown out of this search for natural knowledge of so merely useful a character? You all know the reply. Astronomy—which of all sciences has filled men's minds with general ideas of a character most foreign to their daily experience, and has, more than any other, rendered it impossible for them to accept the beliefs of their fathers. Astronomy—which tells them that this so vast and seemingly solid earth is but an atom among atoms, whirling, no man knows whither, through illimitable space; which demonstrates that what we call the peaceful heaven above us, is but that space, filled by an infinitely subtle matter whose particles are seething and surging, like the waves of an angry sea; which opens up to us infinite regions where nothing is known, or ever seems to have been known, but matter and force, operating according to rigid rules; which leads us to contemplate phenomena the very nature of which demonstrates that they must have had a beginning, and that they must have an end, but the very nature of which also proves that the beginning was,

to our conceptions of time, infinitely remote, and that the end is as immeasurably distant.

But it is not alone those who pursue astronomy who ask for bread and receive ideas. What more harmless than the attempt to lift and distribute water by pumping it; what more absolutely and grossly utilitarian? But out of pumps grew the discussions about nature's abhorrence of a vacuum; and then it was discovered that nature does not abhor a vacuum, but that air has weight; and that notion paved the way for the doctrine that all matter has weight, and that the force which produces weight is co-extensive with the universe—in short, to the theory of universal gravitation and endless force. And learning how to handle gases led to the discovery of oxygen and to modern chemistry, and to the notion of the indestructibility of matter.

Again, what simpler, or more absolutely practical, than the attempt to keep the axle of a wheel from heating when the wheel turns round very fast? How useful for carters and gig drivers to know something about this; and how good were it, if any ingenious person would find out the cause of such phenomena, and thence educe a general remedy for them. Such an ingenious person was Count Rumford; and he and his successors have landed us in the theory of the persistence or indestructibility of force. And in the infinitely minute, as in the infinitely great, the seekers after natural knowledge of the kinds called physical and chemical, have everywhere found a definite order and succession of events which seem never to be infringed.

And how has it fared with "Physick" and Anatomy? Have the anatomist, the physiologist, or the physician, whose business it has been to devote themselves assiduously to that eminently practical and direct end, the alleviation of the sufferings of mankind—have they been able to confine their vision more absolutely to the strictly useful? I fear they are the worst offenders of all. For if the astronomer has set before us the infinite magnitude of space, and the practical eternity of the duration of the universe; if the physical and chemical philosophers have demonstrated the infinite minuteness of its constituent parts, and the practical eternity of matter and of force; and if both have alike proclaimed the universality of a definite and predicable order and succession of events, the workers in biology have not only accepted all these, but have added more

startling theses of their own. For, as the astronomers discover in the earth no centre of the universe, but an eccentric speck, so the naturalists find man to be no centre of the living world, but one amidst endless modifications of life; and as the astronomer observes the mark of practically endless time set upon the arrangements of the solar system, so the student of life finds the records of ancient forms of existence peopling the world for ages, which, in relation to human experience, are infinite.

Furthermore, the physiologist finds life to be as dependent for its manifestation on particular molecular arrangements as any physical or chemical phenomenon; and, wherever he extends his researches, fixed order and unchanging causation reveal themselves, as plainly as in the rest of nature.

Nor can I find that any other fate has awaited the germ of Religion. Arising, like all other kinds of knowledge, out of the action and interaction of man's mind, with that which is not man's mind, it has taken the intellectual coverings of Fetishism or Polytheism; of Theism or Atheism; of Superstition or Rationalism. With these, and their relative merits and demerits, I have nothing to do; but this it is needful for my purpose to say, that if the religion of the present differs from that of the past, it is because the theology of the present has become more scientific than that of the past; because it has not only renounced idols of wood and idols of stone, but begins to see the necessity of breaking in pieces the idols built up of books and traditions and finespun ecclesiastical cobwebs: and of cherishing the noblest and most human of man's emotions, by worship "for the most part of the silent sort" at the altar of the Unknown and Unknowable.

Such are a few of the new conceptions implanted in our minds by the improvement of natural knowledge. Men have acquired the ideas of the practically infinite extent of the universe and of its practical eternity; they are familiar with the conception that our earth is but an infinitesimal fragment of that part of the universe which can be seen; and that, nevertheless, its duration is, as compared with our standards of time, infinite. They have further acquired the idea that man is but one of innumerable forms of life now existing on the globe, and that the present existences are but the last of an immeasurable series of predecessors. Furthermore, every step they have made in natural knowledge has tended to extend and rivet in

their minds the conception of a definite order of the universe — which is embodied in what are called, by an unhappy metaphor, the laws of nature — and to narrow the range and loosen the force of men's belief in spontaneity, or in changes other than such as arise out of that definite order itself.

Whether these ideas are well or ill founded is not the question. No one can deny that they exist, and have been the inevitable outgrowth of the improvement of natural knowledge. And if so, it cannot be doubted that they are changing the form of men's most cherished and most important convictions.

And as regards the second point — the extent to which the improvement of natural knowledge has remodelled and altered what may be termed the intellectual ethics of men — what are among the moral convictions most fondly held by barbarous and semi-barbarous people?

They are the convictions that authority is the soundest basis of belief; that merit attaches to a readiness to believe; that the doubting disposition is a bad one, and scepticism a sin; that when good authority has pronounced what is to be believed, and faith has accepted it, reason has no further duty. There are many excellent persons who yet hold by these principles, and it is not my present business, or intention, to discuss their views. All I wish to bring clearly before your minds is the unquestionable fact that the improvement of natural knowledge is affected by methods which directly give the lie to all these convictions, and assume the exact reverse of each to be true.

The improver of natural knowledge absolutely refuses to acknowledge authority, as such. For him, scepticism is the highest of duties; blind faith the one unpardonable sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cherishing of the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith; and the most ardent votary of science holds his firmest convictions, not because the men he most venerates hold them; not because their verity is testified by portents and wonders; but because his experience teaches him that whenever he chooses to bring these convictions into contact with their primary source, nature — whenever he thinks fit to test them by appealing to experiment and to observation — nature will confirm them. The man

of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification.

Thus, without for a moment pretending to despise the practical results of the improvement of natural knowledge, and its beneficial influence on material civilization, it must, I think, be admitted that the great ideas, some of which I have indicated, and the ethical spirit which I have endeavored to sketch, in the few moments which remained at my disposal, constitute the real and permanent significance of natural knowledge.

If these ideas be destined, as I believe they are, to be more and more firmly established as the world grows older; if that spirit be fated, as I believe it is, to extend itself into all departments of human thought, and to become co-extensive with the range of knowledge; if, as our race approaches its maturity, it discovers, as I believe it will, that there is but one kind of knowledge and but one method of acquiring it; then we, who are still children, may justly feel it our highest duty to recognize the advisableness of improving natural knowledge, and so to aid ourselves and our successors in our course towards the noble goal which lies before mankind.

A LIBERAL EDUCATION; AND WHERE TO FIND IT

1871

A lecture delivered at the South London Working Men's College, and published in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. The concluding portion of the lecture deals with conditions peculiar to England in Huxley's day.

The business which the South London Working Men's College has undertaken is a great work; indeed, I might say, that Education, with which that college proposes to grapple, is the greatest work of all those which lie ready to a man's hand just at present.

And, at length, this fact is becoming generally recognized. You cannot go anywhere without hearing a buzz of more or less confused and contradictory talk on this subject — nor can you fail to notice that, in one point at any rate, there is a very decided advance upon like discussions in former days. Nobody outside the agricultural interest now dares to say that education is a bad thing. If any representative of the once large and powerful party, which, in former days, proclaimed this opinion, still exists in a semi-fossil state, he keeps his thoughts to himself.

In fact, there is a chorus of voices, almost distressing in their harmony, raised in favor of the doctrine that education is the great panacea for human troubles, and that, if the country is not shortly to go to the dogs, everybody must be educated.

The politicians tell us, "you must educate the masses because they are going to be masters." The clergy join in the cry for education, for they affirm that the people are drifting away from church and chapel into the broadest infidelity. The manufacturers and the capitalists swell the chorus lustily. They declare that ignorance makes bad workmen; that England will soon be unable to turn out cotton goods, or steam engines, cheaper than other people; and then, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory will be departed from us. And a few voices are lifted up in favor of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being, doing, and suffering, and that it is as true now, as ever it was, that the people perish for lack of knowledge.

These members of the minority, with whom I confess I have a good deal of sympathy, are doubtful whether any of the other reasons urged in favor of the education of the people are of much value — whether, indeed, some of them are based upon either wise or noble grounds of action. They question if it be wise to tell people that you will do for them, out of fear of their power, what you have left undone, so long as your only motive was compassion for their weakness and their sorrows. And if ignorance of everything which it is needful a ruler should know is likely to do so much harm in the governing classes of the future, why is it, they ask reasonably enough, that such ignorance in the governing classes of the past has not been viewed with equal horror?

Compare the average artisan and the average country squire, and it may be doubted if you will find a pin to choose between the two in point of ignorance, class feeling, or prejudice. It is true that the ignorance is of a different sort — that the class feeling is in favor of a different class — and that the prejudice has a distinct savor of wrong-headedness in each case — but it is questionable if the one is either a bit better, or a bit worse, than the other. The old protectionist theory is the doctrine of trades unions as applied by the squires, and the modern trades unionism is the doctrine of the squires applied by the artisans. Why should we be

worse off under one *régime* than under the other?

Again, this sceptical minority asks the clergy to think whether it is really want of education which keeps the masses away from their ministrations — whether the most completely educated men are not as open to reproach on this score as the workmen; and whether, perchance, this may not indicate that it is not education which lies at the bottom of the matter?

Once more, these people, whom there is no pleasing, venture to doubt whether the glory, which rests upon being able to undersell all the rest of the world, is a very safe kind of glory — whether we may not purchase it too dear; especially if we allow education, which ought to be directed to the making of men, to be diverted into a process of manufacturing human tools, wonderfully adroit in the exercise of some technical industry, but good for nothing else.

And, finally, these people inquire whether it is the masses alone who need a reformed and improved education. They ask whether the richest of our public schools might not well be made to supply knowledge, as well as gentlemanly habits, a strong class feeling, and eminent proficiency in cricket. They seem to think that the noble foundations of our old universities are hardly fulfilling their functions in their present posture of half-clerical seminaries, half racecourses, where men are trained to win a senior wranglership, or a double-first, as horses are trained to win a cup, with as little reference to the needs of after-life in the case of the man as in that of the racer. And while as zealous for education as the rest, they affirm that if the education of the richer classes were such as to fit them to be the leaders and the governors of the poorer; and if the education of the poorer classes were such as to enable them to appreciate really wise guidance and good governance, the politicians need not fear mob-law, nor the clergy lament their want of flocks, nor the capitalists prognosticate the annihilation of the prosperity of the country.

Such is the diversity of opinion upon the why and the wherefore of education. And my hearers will be prepared to expect that the practical recommendations which are put forward are not less discordant. There is a loud cry for compulsory education. We English, in spite of constant experience to the contrary, preserve a touching faith in the efficacy of acts of parliament; and I believe we should have compulsory education in the

course of next session if there were the least probability that half a dozen leading statesmen of different parties would agree what that education should be.

Some hold that education without theology is worse than none. Others maintain, quite as strongly, that education with theology is in the same predicament. But this is certain, that those who hold the first opinion can by no means agree what theology should be taught; and that those who maintain the second are in a small minority.

At any rate "make people learn to read, write, and cipher," say a great many; and the advice is undoubtedly sensible as far as it goes. But, as has happened to me in former days, those who, in despair of getting anything better, advocate this measure, are met with the objection that it is very like making a child practise the use of a knife, fork, and spoon, without giving it a particle of meat. I really don't know what reply is to be made to such an objection.

But it would be unprofitable to spend more time in disentangling, or rather in showing up the knots in, the ravelled skeins of our neighbors. Much more to the purpose is it to ask if we possess any clue of our own which may guide us among these entanglements. And by way of a beginning, let us ask ourselves — What is education? Above all things, what is our ideal of a thoroughly liberal education? — of that education which, if we could begin life again, we would give ourselves — of that education which, if we could mold the fates to our own will, we would give our children? Well, I know not what may be your conceptions upon this matter, but I will tell you mine, and I hope I shall find that our views are not very discrepant.

Suppose it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game at chess. Don't you think that we should all consider it to be a primary duty to learn at least the names and the moves of the pieces; to have a notion of a gambit, and a keen eye for all the means of giving and getting out of check? Do you not think that we should look with a disapprobation amounting to scorn, upon the father who allowed his son, or the state which allowed its members, to grow up without knowing a pawn from a knight?

Yet, it is a very plain and elementary truth that the life, the fortune, and the happiness of every one of us, and, more or less,

of those who are connected with us, do depend upon our knowing something of the rules of a game infinitely more difficult and complicated than chess. It is a game which has been played for untold ages, every man and woman of us being one of the two players in a game of his or her own. The chess-board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, the rules of the game are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that his play is always fair, just, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that he never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well, the highest stakes are paid, with that sort of overflowing generosity with which the strong shows delight in strength. And one who plays ill is checkmated—without haste, but without remorse.

My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Retzsch has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel who is playing for love, as we say, and would rather lose than win—and I should accept it as an image of human life.

Well, what I mean by Education is learning the rules of this mighty game. In other words, education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. For me, education means neither more nor less than this. Anything which professes to call itself education must be tried by this standard, and if it fails to stand the test, I will not call it education, whatever may be the force of authority or of numbers upon the other side.

It is important to remember that, in strictness, there is no such thing as an uneducated man. Take an extreme case. Suppose that an adult man, in the full vigor of his faculties, could be suddenly placed in the world, as Adam is said to have been, and then left to do as he best might. How long would he be left uneducated? Not five minutes. Nature would begin to teach him, through the eye, the ear, the touch, the properties of objects. Pain and pleasure would be at his elbow telling him to do this and avoid that; and by slow degrees the man would receive an education which, if narrow, would be

thorough, real, and adequate to his circumstances, though there would be no extras and very few accomplishments.

And if to this solitary man entered a second Adam, or, better still, an Eve, a new and greater world, that of social and moral phenomena, would be revealed. Joys and woes, compared with which all others might seem but faint shadows, would spring from the new relations. Happiness and sorrow would take the place of the coarser monitors, pleasure and pain; but conduct would still be shaped by the observation of the natural consequences of actions; or, in other words, by the laws of the nature of man.

To every one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then, long before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, Nature took us in hand, and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence, shaping our actions into rough accordance with Nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past, for any one, be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day, and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And Nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university, the universe, of which we are all members—Nature having no Test-Acts.

Those who take honors in Nature's university, who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them, are the really great and successful men in this world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll," who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are plucked; and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as Nature is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of Nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience—incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first; but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education—that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as arti-

ficial education — is to make good these defects in Nature's methods; to prepare the child to receive Nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with wilful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her pleasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural education. And a liberal education is an artificial education, which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely; she as his ever-beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter. . . .

ON THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF LIFE

1868

A lecture delivered at Edinburgh, November 8, 1868, and printed in the *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1869, and in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. Huxley here defines the philosophy of science, and his own position as an agnostic, i.e., one who refuses to believe in anything that cannot be proved by scientific methods.

In order to make the title of this discourse generally intelligible, I have translated the term "Protoplasm," which is the scientific

name of the substance of which I am about to speak, by the words "the physical basis of life." I suppose that, to many, the idea that there is such a thing as a physical basis, or matter, of life may be novel — so widely spread is the conception of life as a something which works through matter, but is independent of it; and even those who are aware that matter and life are inseparably connected, may not be prepared for the conclusion plainly suggested by the phrase, "the physical basis or matter of life," that there is some one kind of matter which is common to all living beings, and that their endless diversities are bound together by a physical, as well as an ideal, unity. In fact, when first apprehended, such a doctrine as this appears almost shocking to common sense.

What, truly, can seem to be more obviously different from one another, in faculty, in form, and in substance, than the various kinds of living beings? What community of faculty can there be between the bright-colored lichen, which so nearly resembles a mere mineral incrustation of the bare rock on which it grows, and the painter, to whom it is instinct with beauty, or the botanist, whom it feeds with knowledge?

Again, think of the microscopic fungus — a mere infinitesimal ovoid particle, which finds space and duration enough to multiply into countless millions in the body of a living fly; and then of the wealth of foliage, the luxuriance of flower and fruit, which lies between this bald sketch of a plant and the giant pine of California, towering to the dimensions of a cathedral spire, or the Indian fig, which covers acres with its profound shadow, and endures while nations and empires come and go around its vast circumference. Or, turning to the other half of the world of life, picture to yourselves the great Finner whale, hugest of beasts that live, or have lived, disporting his eighty or ninety feet of bone, muscle and blubber, with easy roll, among waves in which the stoutest ship that ever left dockyard would flounder hopelessly; and contrast him with the invisible animalcules — mere gelatinous specks, multitudes of which could, in fact, dance upon the point of a needle with the same ease as the angels of the Schoolmen could, in imagination. With these images before your minds, you may well ask, what community of form, or structure, is there between the animalcule and the whale; or between the fungus and the fig-tree? And, *a fortiori*,¹ between all four?

¹ so much the more.

Finally, if we regard substance, or material composition, what hidden bond can connect the flower which a girl wears in her hair and the blood which courses through her youthful veins; or, what is there in common between the dense and resisting mass of the oak, or the strong fabric of the tortoise, and those broad disks of glassy jelly which may be seen pulsating through the waters of a calm sea, but which drain away to mere films in the hand which raises them out of their element?

Such objections as these must, I think, arise in the mind of every one who ponders, for the first time, upon the conception of a single physical basis of life underlying all the diversities of vital existence; but I propose to demonstrate to you that, notwithstanding these apparent difficulties, a threefold unity — namely, a unity of power or faculty, a unity of form, and a unity of substantial composition — does pervade the whole living world.

No very abstruse argumentation is needed, in the first place, to prove that the powers, or faculties, of all kinds of living matter, diverse as they may be in degree, are substantially similar in kind.

Goethe has condensed a survey of all powers of mankind into the well-known epigram:

*"Warum treibt sich das Volk so und schreit? Es
will sich ernähren,
Kinder zeugen, und die nähren so gut es vermag.
Weiter bringt es kein Mensch, stell' er sich
wie er auch will."*^x

In physiological language this means, that all the multifarious and complicated activities of man are comprehensible under three categories. Either they are immediately directed towards the maintenance and development of the body, or they effect transitory changes in the relative positions of parts of the body, or they tend towards the continuance of the species. Even those manifestations of intellect, of feeling, and of will, which we rightly name the higher faculties, are not excluded from this classification, inasmuch as to every one but the subject of them, they are known only as transitory changes in the relative positions of parts of the body. Speech, gesture, and every other

form of human action are, in the long run, resolvable into muscular contraction, and muscular contraction is but a transitory change in the relative positions of the parts of a muscle. But the scheme which is large enough to embrace the activities of the highest form of life, covers all those of the lower creatures. The lowest plant, or animalcule, feeds, grows, and reproduces its kind. In addition, all animals manifest those transitory changes of form which we class under irritability and contractility; and it is more than probable that when the vegetable world is thoroughly explored, we shall find all plants in possession of the same powers, at one time or other of their existence.

I am not now alluding to such phenomena, at once rare and conspicuous, as those exhibited by the leaflets of the sensitive plants, or the stamens of the barberry, but to much more widely spread, and at the same time, more subtle and hidden, manifestations of vegetable contractility. You are doubtless aware that the common nettle owes its stinging property to the innumerable stiff and needle-like, though exquisitely delicate, hairs which cover its surface. Each stinging-needle tapers from a broad base to a slender summit, which, though rounded at the end, is of such microscopic fineness that it readily penetrates, and breaks off in, the skin. The whole hair consists of a very delicate outer case of wood, closely applied to the inner surface of which is a layer of semifluid matter, full of innumerable granules of extreme minuteness. This semifluid lining is protoplasm, which thus constitutes a kind of bag, full of a limpid liquid, and roughly corresponding in form with the interior of the hair which it fills. When viewed with a sufficiently high magnifying power, the protoplasmic layer of the nettle hair is seen to be in a condition of unceasing activity. Local contractions of the whole thickness of its substance pass slowly and gradually from point to point, and give rise to the appearance of progressive waves, just as the bending of successive stalks of corn by a breeze produces the apparent billows of a cornfield.

But, in addition to these movements, and independently of them, the granules are driven, in relatively rapid streams, through channels in the protoplasm which seem to have a considerable amount of persistence. Most commonly, the currents in adjacent parts of the protoplasm take similar directions; and thus there is a general stream up

^x "Why does the mass of people so push and shout? They wish to acquire a living, bring forth children, and nurture them as well as they can. . . . No man can go further, let him imagine what he will." (From the *Venetian Epigrams*.)

one side of the hair and down the other. But this does not prevent the existence of partial currents which take different routes; and sometimes trains of granules may be seen coursing swiftly in opposite directions within a twenty-thousandth of an inch of one another; while, occasionally, opposite streams come into direct collision, and, after a longer or shorter struggle, one predominates. The cause of these currents seems to lie in contractions of the protoplasm which bounds the channels in which they flow, but which are so minute that the best microscopes show only their effects, and not themselves.

The spectacle afforded by the wonderful energies prisoned within the compass of the microscopic hair of a plant, which we commonly regard as a merely passive organism, is not easily forgotten by one who has watched its display, continued hour after hour, without pause or sign of weakening. The possible complexity of many other organic forms, seemingly as simple as the protoplasm of the nettle, dawns upon one; and the comparison of such a protoplasm to a body with an internal circulation, which has been put forward by an eminent physiologist, loses much of its startling character. Currents similar to those of the hairs of the nettle have been observed in a great multitude of very different plants, and weighty authorities have suggested that they probably occur, in more or less perfection, in all young vegetable cells. If such be the case, the wonderful noonday silence of a tropical forest is, after all, due only to the dulness of our hearing; and could our ears catch the murmur of these tiny Maelstroms, as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of living cells which constitute each tree, we should be stunned, as with the roar of a great city.

Among the lower plants, it is the rule rather than the exception, that contractility should be still more openly manifested at some periods of their existence. The protoplasm of *Algae* and *Fungi* becomes, under many circumstances, partially, or completely, freed from its woody case, and exhibits movements of its whole mass, or is propelled by the contractility of one or more hair-like prolongations of its body, which are called vibratile cilia. And, so far as the conditions of the manifestation of the phenomena of contractility have yet been studied, they are the same for the plant as for the animal. Heat and electric shocks influence both, and in the same way, though

it may be in different degrees. It is by no means my intention to suggest that there is no difference in faculty between the lowest plant and the highest, or between plants and animals. But the difference between the powers of the lowest plant, or animal, and those of the highest, is one of degree, not of kind, and depends, as Milne-Edwards long ago so well pointed out, upon the extent to which the principle of the division of labor is carried out in the living economy. In the lowest organism all parts are competent to perform all functions, and one and the same portion of protoplasm may successfully take on the function of feeding, moving, or reproducing apparatus. In the highest, on the contrary, a great number of parts combine to perform each function, each part doing its allotted share of the work with great accuracy and efficiency, but being useless for any other purpose.

On the other hand, notwithstanding all the fundamental resemblances which exist between the powers of the protoplasm in plants and in animals, they present a striking difference (to which I shall advert more at length presently), in the fact that plants can manufacture fresh protoplasm out of mineral compounds, whereas animals are obliged to procure it ready made, and hence, in the long run, depend upon plants. Upon what condition this difference in the powers of the two great divisions of the world of life depends, nothing is at present known.

With such qualifications as arise out of the last-mentioned fact, it may be truly said that the acts of all living things are fundamentally one. Is any such unity predicable of their forms? Let us seek in easily verified facts for a reply to this question. If a drop of blood be drawn by pricking one's finger, and viewed with proper precautions, and under a sufficiently high microscopic power, there will be seen, among the innumerable multitude of little, circular, discoidal bodies, or corpuscles, which float in it and give it its color, a comparatively small number of colorless corpuscles, of somewhat larger size and very irregular shape. If the drop of blood be kept at the temperature of the body, these colorless corpuscles will be seen to exhibit a marvellous activity, changing their forms with great rapidity, drawing in and thrusting out prolongations of their substance, and creeping about as if they were independent organisms.

The substance which is thus active is a mass of protoplasm, and its activity differs in

detail, rather than in principle, from that of the protoplasm of the nettle. Under sundry circumstances the corpuscle dies and becomes distended into a round mass, in the midst of which is seen a smaller spherical body, which existed, but was more or less hidden, in the living corpuscle, and is called its *nucleus*. Corpuscles of essentially similar structure are to be found in the skin, in the lining of the mouth, and scattered through the whole framework of the body. Nay, more; in the earliest condition of the human organism, in that state in which it has but just become distinguishable from the egg in which it arises, it is nothing but an aggregation of such corpuscles, and every organ of the body was, once, no more than such an aggregation.

Thus a nucleated mass of protoplasm turns out to be what may be termed the structural unit of the human body. As a matter of fact, the body, in its earliest state, is a mere multiple of such units; and in its perfect condition, it is a multiple of such units, variously modified.

But does the formula which expresses the essential structural character of the highest animal cover all the rest, as the statement of its powers and faculties covered that of all others? Very nearly. Beast and fowl, reptile and fish, mollusk, worm, and polyp, are all composed of structural units of the same character, namely, masses of protoplasm with a nucleus. There are sundry very low animals, each of which, structurally, is a mere colorless blood-corpuscle, leading an independent life. But, at the very bottom of the animal scale, even this simplicity becomes simplified, and all the phenomena of life are manifested by a particle of protoplasm without a nucleus. Nor are such organisms insignificant by reason of their want of complexity. It is a fair question whether the protoplasm of those simplest forms of life which people an immense extent of the bottom of the sea, would not outweigh that of all the higher living beings which inhabit the land put together. And in ancient times, no less than at the present day, such living beings as these have been the greatest of rock builders.

What has been said of the animal world is no less true of plants. Imbedded in the protoplasm at the broad, or attached, end of the nettle hair, there lies a spheroidal nucleus. Careful examination further proves that the whole substance of the nettle is made up of a repetition of such masses of nucleated protoplasm, each contained in a wooden case,

which is modified in form, sometimes into a woody fibre, sometimes into a duct or spiral vessel, sometimes into a pollen grain, or an ovule. Traced back to its earliest state, the nettle arises as the man does, in a particle of nucleated protoplasm. And in the lowest plants, as in the lowest animals, a single mass of such protoplasm may constitute the whole plant, or the protoplasm may exist without a nucleus.

Under these circumstances, it may well be asked, how is one mass of non-nucleated protoplasm to be distinguished from another? why call one "plant" and the other "animal"?

The only reply is that, so far as form is concerned, plants and animals are not separable, and that, in many cases, it is a mere matter of convention whether we call a given organism an animal or a plant. There is a living body called *Æthelium septicum*, which appears upon decaying vegetable substances, and, in one of its forms, is common upon the surfaces of tan-pits. In this condition it is, to all intents and purposes, a fungus, and formerly was always regarded as such; but the remarkable investigations of De Bary have shown that, in another condition, the *Æthelium* is an actively locomotive creature, and takes in solid matters, upon which, apparently, it feeds, thus exhibiting the most characteristic feature of animality. Is this a plant; or is it an animal? Is it both; or is it neither? Some decide in favor of the last supposition, and establish an intermediate kingdom, a sort of biological No Man's Land for all these questionable forms. But, as it is admittedly impossible to draw any distinct boundary line between this no man's land and the vegetable world on the one hand, or the animal, on the other, it appears to me that this proceeding merely doubles the difficulty which before was single.

Protoplasm, simple or nucleated, is the formal basis of all life. It is the clay of the potter: which, bake it and paint it as he will, remains clay, separated by artifice, and not by nature, from the commonest brick or sun-dried clod.

Thus it becomes clear that all living powers are cognate, and that all living forms are fundamentally of one character. The researches of the chemist have revealed a no less striking uniformity of material composition in living matter.

In perfect strictness, it is true that chemical investigation can tell us little or nothing,

directly, of the composition of living matter, inasmuch as such matter must needs die in the act of analysis — and upon this very obvious ground, objections, which I confess seem to me to be somewhat frivolous, have been raised to the drawing of any conclusions whatever respecting the composition of actually living matter, from that of the dead matter of life, which alone is accessible to us. But objectors of this class do not seem to reflect that it is also, in strictness, true that we know nothing about the composition of any body whatever, as it is. The statement that a crystal of calc-spar consists of carbonate of lime, is quite true, if we only mean that, by appropriate processes, it may be resolved into carbonic acid and quicklime. If you pass the same carbonic acid over the very quicklime thus obtained, you will obtain carbonate of lime again; but it will not be calc-spar, nor anything like it. Can it, therefore, be said that chemical analysis teaches nothing about the chemical composition of calc-spar? Such a statement would be absurd; but it is hardly more so than the talk one occasionally hears about the uselessness of applying the results of chemical analysis to the living bodies which have yielded them.

One fact, at any rate, is out of reach of such refinements, and that is, that all the forms of protoplasm which have yet been examined contain the four elements, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, in very complex union, and that they behave similarly towards several reagents. To this complex combination, the nature of which has never been determined with exactness, the name of Protein has been applied. And if we use this term with such caution as may properly arise out of our comparative ignorance of the things for which it stands, it may be truly said that all protoplasm is proteinaceous; or, as the white, or albumen, of an egg is one of the commonest examples of a nearly pure protein matter, we may say that all living matter is more or less albuminoid.

Perhaps it would not yet be safe to say that all forms of protoplasm are affected by the direct action of electric shocks; and yet the number of cases in which the contraction of protoplasm is shown to be affected by this agency increases every day.

Nor can it be affirmed with perfect confidence, that all forms of protoplasm are liable to undergo that peculiar coagulation at a temperature of 40°–50° centigrade,

which has been called "heat-stiffening," though Kühne's beautiful researches have proved this occurrence to take place in so many and such diverse living beings, that it is hardly rash to expect that the law holds good for all.

Enough has, perhaps, been said to prove the existence of a general uniformity in the character of the protoplasm, or physical basis, of life, in whatever group of living beings it may be studied. But it will be understood that this general uniformity by no means excludes any amount of special modifications of the fundamental substance. The mineral, carbonate of lime, assumes an immense diversity of characters, though no one doubts that, under all these Protean changes, it is one and the same thing.

And now, what is the ultimate fate, and what the origin, of the matter of life?

Is it, as some of the older naturalists supposed, diffused throughout the universe in molecules, which are indestructible and unchangeable in themselves, but, in endless transmigration, unite in innumerable permutations, into the diversified forms of life we know? Or, is the matter of life composed of ordinary matter, differing from it only in the manner in which its atoms are aggregated? Is it built up of ordinary matter, and again resolved into ordinary matter when its work is done?

Modern science does not hesitate a moment between these alternatives. Physiology writes over the portals of life —

"*Debemur morti nos nostraque*," *

with a profounder meaning than the Roman poet attached to that melancholy line. Under whatever disguise it takes refuge, whether fungus or oak, worm or man, the living protoplasm not only ultimately dies and is resolved into its mineral and lifeless constituents, but is always dying, and, strange as the paradox may sound, could not live unless it died.

In the wonderful story of the *Peau de Chagrin*,² the hero becomes possessed of a magical wild ass's skin, which yields him the means of gratifying all his wishes. But its surface represents the duration of the proprietor's life; and for every satisfied desire the skin shrinks in proportion to the intensity of fruition, until at length life, and the last

¹ "Ourselves and what we have to death are due." (Horace.)

² *The Wild Ass's Skin*, by Balzac.

handbreadth of the *peau de chagrin*, disappear with the gratification of a last wish.

Balzac's studies had led him over a wide range of thought and speculation, and his shadowing forth of physiological truth in this strange story may have been intentional. At any rate, the matter of life is a veritable *peau de chagrin*, and for every vital act it is somewhat the smaller. All work implies waste, and the work of life results, directly or indirectly, in the waste of protoplasm.

Every word uttered by a speaker costs him some physical loss; and, in the strictest sense, he burns that others may have light — so much eloquence, so much of his body resolved into carbonic acid, water, and urea. It is clear that this process of expenditure cannot go on for ever. But, happily, the protoplasmic *peau de chagrin* differs from Balzac's in its capacity of being repaired, and brought back to its full size, after every exertion.

For example, this present lecture, whatever its intellectual worth to you, has a certain physical value to me, which is, conceivably, expressible by the number of grains of protoplasm and other bodily substance wasted in maintaining my vital processes during its delivery. My *peau de chagrin* will be distinctly smaller at the end of the discourse than it was at the beginning. By and by, I shall probably have recourse to the substance commonly called mutton, for the purpose of stretching it back to its original size. Now this mutton was once the living protoplasm, more or less modified, of another animal — a sheep. As I shall eat it, it is the same matter altered, not only by death, but by exposure to sundry artificial operations in the process of cooking.

But these changes, whatever be their extent, have not rendered it incompetent to resume its old functions as matter of life. A singular inward laboratory, which I possess, will dissolve a certain portion of the modified protoplasm; the solution so formed will pass into my veins; and the subtle influences to which it will then be subjected will convert the dead protoplasm into living protoplasm, and transubstantiate sheep into man.

Nor is this all. If digestion were a thing to be trifled with, I might sup upon lobster, and the matter of life of the crustacean would undergo the same wonderful metamorphosis into humanity. And were I to return to my own place by sea, and undergo shipwreck, the crustacean might, and probably would, re-

turn the compliment, and demonstrate our common nature by turning my protoplasm into living lobster. Or, if nothing better were to be had, I might supply my wants with mere bread, and I should find the protoplasm of the wheat-plant to be convertible into man, with no more trouble than that of the sheep, and with far less, I fancy, than that of the lobster.

Hence it appears to be a matter of no great moment what animal, or what plant, I lay under contribution for protoplasm, and the fact speaks volumes for the general identity of that substance in all living beings. I share this catholicity of assimilation with other animals, all of which, so far as we know, could thrive equally well on the protoplasm of any of their fellows, or of any plant; but here the assimilative powers of the animal world cease. A solution of smelling-salts in water, with an infinitesimal proportion of some other saline matters, contains all the elementary bodies which enter into the composition of protoplasm; but, as I need hardly say, a hogshead of that fluid would not keep a hungry man from starving, nor would it save any animal whatever from a like fate. An animal cannot make protoplasm, but must take it ready-made from some other animal, or some plant — the animal's highest feat of constructive chemistry being to convert dead protoplasm into that living matter of life which is appropriate to itself.

Therefore, in seeking for the origin of protoplasm, we must eventually turn to the vegetable world. A fluid containing carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts, which offers such a Barmecide feast¹ to the animal, is a table richly spread to multitudes of plants; and, with a due supply of only such materials, many a plant will not only maintain itself in vigor, but grow and multiply until it has increased a million-fold, or a million million-fold, the quantity of protoplasm which it originally possessed; in this way building up the matter of life, to an indefinite extent, from the common matter of the universe.

Thus, the animal can only raise the complex substance of dead protoplasm to the higher power, as one may say, of living protoplasm; while the plant can raise the less complex substances — carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts — to the same stage of living protoplasm, if not to the same level. But the plant also has its limitations. Some

¹ A mock feast, of empty dishes (from the story of the Barmecide family in the *Arabian Nights*).

of the fungi, for example, appear to need higher compounds to start with; and no known plant can live upon the uncompounded elements of protoplasm. A plant supplied with pure carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, and the like, would as infallibly die as the animal in his bath of smelling-salts, though it would be surrounded by all the constituents of protoplasm. Nor, indeed, need the process of simplification of vegetable food be carried so far as this, in order to arrive at the limit of the plant's thaumaturgy. Let water, carbonic acid, and all the other needful constituents be supplied except nitrogenous salts, and an ordinary plant will still be unable to manufacture protoplasm.

Thus the matter of life, so far as we know it (and we have no right to speculate on any other), breaks up, in consequence of that continual death which is the condition of its manifesting vitality, into carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous compounds, which certainly possess no properties but those of ordinary matter. And out of these same forms of ordinary matter, and from none which are simpler, the vegetable world builds up all the protoplasm which keeps the animal world a-going. Plants are the accumulators of the power which animals distribute and disperse.

But it will be observed that the existence of the matter of life depends on the pre-existence of certain compounds; namely, carbonic acid, water, and certain nitrogenous bodies. Withdraw any one of these three from the world, and all vital phenomena come to an end. They are as necessary to the protoplasm of the plant, as the protoplasm of the plant is to that of the animal. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. Of these, carbon and oxygen unite in certain proportions and under certain conditions, to give rise to carbonic acid; hydrogen and oxygen produce water; nitrogen and other elements give rise to nitrogenous salts. These new compounds, like the elementary bodies of which they are composed, are lifeless. But when they are brought together, under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm, and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life.

I see no break in this series of steps in molecular complication, and I am unable to understand why the language which is applicable to any one term of the series may not be used to any of the others. We think

fit to call different kinds of matter carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, and to speak of the various powers and activities of these substances as the properties of the matter of which they are composed.

When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed in a certain proportion, and an electric spark is passed through them, they disappear, and a quantity of water, equal in weight to the sum of their weights, appears in their place. There is not the slightest parity between the passive and active powers of the water and those of the oxygen and hydrogen which have given rise to it. At 32° Fahrenheit, and far below that temperature, oxygen and hydrogen are elastic gaseous bodies, whose particles tend to rush away from one another with great force. Water, at the same temperature, is a strong though brittle solid whose particles tend to cohere into definite geometrical shapes, and sometimes build up frosty imitations of the most complex forms of vegetable foliage.

Nevertheless we call these, and many other strange phenomena, the properties of the water, and we do not hesitate to believe that, in some way or another, they result from the properties of the component elements of the water. We do not assume that a something called "aquosity" entered into and took possession of the oxidated hydrogen as soon as it was formed, and then guided the aqueous particles to their places in the facets of the crystal, or amongst the leaflets of the hoar-frost. On the contrary, we live in the hope and in the faith that, by the advance of molecular physics, we shall by and by be able to see our way as clearly from the constituents of water to the properties of water, as we are now able to deduce the operations of a watch from the form of its parts and the manner in which they are put together.

Is the case in any way changed when carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts disappear, and in their place, under the influence of pre-existing living protoplasm, an equivalent weight of the matter of life makes its appearance?

It is true that there is no sort of parity between the properties of the components and the properties of the resultant, but neither was there in the case of the water. It is also true that what I have spoken of as the influence of pre-existing living matter is something quite unintelligible; but does anybody quite comprehend the *modus operandi* of an electric spark, which traverses a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen?

What justification is there, then, for the assumption of the existence in the living matter of a something which has no representative, or correlative, in the not living matter which gave rise to it? What better philosophical status has "vitality" than "aquosity"? And why should "vitality" hope for a better fate than the other "ityes" which have disappeared since Martinus Scriblerus¹ accounted for the operation of the meat-jack by its inherent "meat-roasting quality," and scorned the "materialism" of those who explained the turning of the spit by a certain mechanism worked by the draught of the chimney?

If scientific language is to possess a definite and constant signification whenever it is employed, it seems to me that we are logically bound to apply to the protoplasm, or physical basis of life, the same conceptions as those which are held to be legitimate elsewhere. If the phenomena exhibited by water are its properties, so are those presented by protoplasm, living or dead, its properties.

If the properties of water may be properly said to result from the nature and disposition of its component molecules, I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm result from the nature and disposition of its molecules.

But I bid you beware that, in accepting these conclusions, you are placing your feet on the first rung of a ladder which, in most people's estimation, is the reverse of Jacob's, and leads to the antipodes of heaven. It may seem a small thing to admit that the dull vital actions of a fungus, or a foraminifer, are the properties of their protoplasm, and are the direct results of the nature of the matter of which they are composed. But if, as I have endeavored to prove to you, their protoplasm is essentially identical with, and most readily converted into, that of any animal, I can discover no logical halting-place between the admission that such is the case, and the further concession that all vital action may, with equal propriety, be said to be the result of the molecular forces of the protoplasm which displays it. And if so, it must be true, in the same sense and to the same extent, that the thoughts to which I am now giving utterance, and your thoughts regarding them, are the expression of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital phenomena.

Past experience leads me to be tolerably certain that, when the propositions I have just placed before you are accessible to public comment and criticism, they will be condemned by many zealous persons, and perhaps by some few of the wise and thoughtful. I should not wonder if "gross and brute materialism" were the mildest phrase applied to them in certain quarters. And, most undoubtedly, the terms of the propositions are distinctly materialistic. Nevertheless two things are certain: the one, that I hold the statements to be substantially true; the other, that I, individually, am no materialist, but, on the contrary, believe materialism to involve grave philosophical error. . . .

What is the difference between the conception of life as the product of a certain disposition of material molecules, and the old notion of an Archæus² governing and directing blind matter within each living body, except this — that here, as elsewhere, matter and law have devoured spirit and spontaneity? And as surely as every future grows out of past and present, so will the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is co-extensive with knowledge, with feeling, and with action. The consciousness of this great truth weighs like a nightmare, I believe, upon many of the best minds of these days. They watch what they conceive to be the progress of materialism, in such fear and powerless anger as a savage feels, when, during an eclipse, the great shadow creeps over the face of the sun. The advancing tide of matter threatens to drown their souls; the tightening grasp of law impedes their freedom; they are alarmed lest man's moral nature be debased by the increase of his wisdom.

If the "New Philosophy" be worthy of the reprobation with which it is visited, I confess their fears seem to me to be well founded. While, on the contrary, could David Hume³ be consulted, I think he would smile at their perplexities, and chide them for doing even as the heathen, and falling down in terror before the hideous idols their own hands have raised.

For, after all, what do we know of this terrible "matter," except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of states of our own consciousness? And what do we know of that "spirit" over whose threatened

¹ The vital principle of animal and vegetable creatures, according to the school of Paracelsus.

² Hume was regarded by Huxley as the founder of the new skeptical philosophy, which refused belief in what could not be proved.

³ A character invented by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, whose alleged *Memoirs* (published 1741) included various satiric attacks on the abuses of learning.

extinction by matter a great lamentation is arising, like that which was heard at the death of Pan, except that it is also a name for an unknown and hypothetical cause, or condition, of states of consciousness? In other words, matter and spirit are but names for the imaginary substrata of groups of natural phenomena.

And what is the dire necessity and "iron" law under which men groan? Truly, most gratuitously invented bugbears. I suppose if there be an "iron" law, it is that of gravitation; and if there be a physical necessity, it is that a stone, unsupported, must fall to the ground. But what is all we really know, and can know, about the latter phenomenon? Simply, that in all human experience stones have fallen to the ground under these conditions; that we have not the smallest reason for believing that any stone so circumstanced will not fall to the ground; and that we have, on the contrary, every reason to believe that it will so fall. It is very convenient to indicate that all the conditions of belief have been fulfilled in this case, by calling the statement that unsupported stones will fall to the ground, "a law of nature." But when, as commonly happens, we change *will* into *must*, we introduce an idea of necessity which most assuredly does not lie in the observed facts, and has no warranty that I can discover elsewhere. For my part, I utterly repudiate and anathematize the intruder. Fact I know; and Law I know; but what is this Necessity, save an empty shadow of my own mind's throwing?

But, if it is certain that we can have no knowledge of the nature of either matter or spirit, and that the notion of necessity is something illegitimately thrust into the perfectly legitimate conception of law, the materialistic position that there is nothing in the world but matter, force, and necessity, is as utterly devoid of justification as the most baseless of theological dogmas. The fundamental doctrines of materialism, like those of spiritualism, and most other "isms," lie outside "the units of philosophical inquiry," and David Hume's great service to humanity is his irrefragable demonstration of what these limits are. Hume called himself a "sceptic," and therefore others cannot be blamed if they apply the same title to him; but that does not alter the fact that the name, with its existing implications, does him gross injustice.

If a man asks me what the politics of the inhabitants of the moon are, and I reply that I do not know, that neither I nor any one

else, have any means of knowing; and that, under these circumstances, I decline to trouble myself about the subject at all, I do not think he has any right to call me a sceptic. On the contrary, in replying thus, I conceive that I am simply honest and truthful, and show a proper regard for the economy of time. So Hume's strong and subtle intellect takes up a great many problems about which we are naturally curious, and shows us that they are essentially questions of lunar politics, in their essence incapable of being answered, and therefore not worth the attention of men who have work to do in the world. And he thus ends one of his essays:

"If we take in hand any volume of Divinity, or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."¹

Permit me to enforce this most wise advice. Why trouble ourselves about matters of which, however important they may be, we do know nothing, and can know nothing? We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance, and the plain duty of each and all of us is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it. To do this effectually it is necessary to be fully possessed of only two beliefs: the first, that the order of nature is ascertainable by our faculties to an extent which is practically unlimited; the second, that our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events.

Each of these beliefs can be verified experimentally, as often as we like to try. Each, therefore, stands upon the strongest foundation upon which any belief can rest, and forms one of our highest truths. If we find that the ascertainment of the order of nature is facilitated by using one terminology, or one set of symbols, rather than another, it is our clear duty to use the former; and no harm can accrue, so long as we bear in mind that we are dealing merely with terms and symbols. In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in terms of matter: matter may be regarded as a form of thought, thought may be regarded as a property of

¹ Hume's Essay "Of the Academical or Sceptical Philosophy," in the *Inquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*.

matter — each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred. For it connects thought with the other phenomena of the universe, and suggests inquiry into the nature of those physical conditions, or concomitants of thought, which are more or less accessible to us, and a knowledge of which may, in future, help us to exercise the same kind of control over the world of thought as we already possess in respect of the material world; whereas the alternative, or spiritualistic, terminology is utterly barren, and leads to nothing but obscurity and confusion of ideas.

Thus there can be little doubt that, the

further science advances, the more extensively and consistently will all the phenomena of nature be represented by materialistic formulæ and symbols. But the man of science, who, forgetting the limits of philosophical inquiry, slides from these formulæ and symbols into what is commonly understood by materialism, seems to me to place himself on a level with the mathematician who should mistake the x 's and y 's with which he works his problems, for real entities — and with this further disadvantage, as compared with the mathematician, that the blunders of the latter are of no practical consequence, while the errors of systematic materialism may paralyze the energies and destroy the beauty of a life.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819-1861)

Arthur Hugh Clough was one of the pupils of Thomas Arnold at Rugby, and the friend of Matthew Arnold. He was born in 1819. After his school days at Rugby he went to Oxford in 1837, then in the full tide of the Oxford Movement led by John Henry Newman. As in the case of other young men, to Clough the revival of the medieval religious spirit caused in the end a reaction to rationalism. He left Oxford in 1848, and after visiting America, he became an Examiner in the Education Office. He died in 1861. Clough is one of the more significant minor figures in English poetry, because his poems, like those of Matthew Arnold, express the doubt and uncertainty caused by the challenge to supernatural faith made by natural science. Clough's characteristic mood, however, is not one of discouragement and pessimism, rather one of courage and joy in achievement. His verse is simple and sparing of ornament, but it has the strength of sincerity. It frequently anticipates the realism of a later day.

Clough's poems are published in one volume by Macmillan. His poems and prose remains have been edited by his wife, with a memoir, in two volumes (Macmillan).

SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

1849.

From DIPSYCHUS

Dipsychus, published after Clough's death, is a poetic play, laid in Venice. As may be gathered from the following lines, spoken by the Spirit in a dialogue with *Dipsychus*, it is filled with humor. In the epilogue to the play, Clough remarks, half-seriously, that his purpose was to represent "the conflict between the tender conscience and the world."

This world is very odd we see,
We do not comprehend it;
But in one fact we all agree,
God won't, and we can't, mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin
To take it as I find it;
The pleasure to take pleasure in;
The pain, try not to mind it.

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,
May be an unreal mere appearance;
Only — for my inside, in fine,
They have a singular coherence.

Oh, yes, my pensive youth, abstain;
And any empty sick sensation,
Remember, anything like pain 15
Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage
To far more purpose e'er than you did;
You find it in his wisest page,
Whom God deludes is well deluded.¹ 20

1849.

QUA CURSUM VENTUS²

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze, 5
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so — but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel, 11
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered —
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed, 15
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass
guides —
To that, and your own selves, be true. 20

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought, 25
One purpose hold where'er they fare, —
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!

Pub. 1849.

THE LATEST DECALOGUE

Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshiped, except the currency:

¹ "Wen Gott betrügt, ist wohl betrogen." Clough used this line as the title of one of his early poems.

² The course lies as the wind blows.

Swear not at all; for, for thy curse 5
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honor thy parents: that is, all
From whom advancement may befall; 10
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officially to keep alive:
Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat, 15
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition. 20

Pub. 1862.

HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE

Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en
as thy thought

So are the things that thou see'st; e'en as
thy hope and belief.

Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise to
provoke thee against them;

Hast thou courage? enough, see them
exulting to yield.

Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild
sea's fuming waters 5

(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou
think'st to destroy),

All with ineffable longing are waiting their
Invader,

All, with one varying voice, call to him,
Come and subdue;

Still for their Conqueror call, and but for the
joy of being conquered

(Rapture they will not forego), dare to
resist and rebel; 10

Still, when resisting and raging, in soft under-
voice say unto him,

Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore
and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and
the stars direct thee,

Go with the girdle of man, go and encom-
pass the earth.

Not for the gain of the gold; for the getting,
the hoarding, the having, 15

But for the joy of the deed; but for the
Duty to do.

Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition
and action,

With the great girdle of God, go and en-
compass the earth.

Go; say not in thy heart, And what then
were it accomplished,
Were the wild impulse allayed, what were
the use or the good! 20

Go, when the instinct is stilled, and when the
deed is accomplished,

What thou hast done and shalt do, shall be
declared to thee then.

Go with the sun and the stars, and yet ever-
more in thy spirit

Say to thyself: It is good: yet is there
better than it.

This that I see is not all, and this that I do is
but little; 25

Nevertheless it is good, though there is
better than it.

Pub. 1862.

QUI LABORAT, ORAT¹

O only Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see
and feel,

But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
Alone aright reveal!

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought,
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine; 6
Chastised each rebel self-encentered thought,
My will adareth Thine.

With eye down-dropt, if then this earthly
mind

Speechless remain, or speechless e'en de-
part; 10

Nor seek to see — for what of earthly kind
Can see Thee as Thou art? —

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold
In thought's abstractest forms to seem to
see,

It dare not dare the dread communion hold 15
In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart pre-
pare;

And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer. 20

Nor times shall lack, when while the work it
plies,

Unsummoned powers the blinding film
shall part,

And scarce by happy tears made dim, the
eyes

In recognition start.

¹ He who works, prays.

But, as thou willest, give or e'en forbear 25
The beatific supersensual sight,
So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler
prayer

Approach Thee morn and night.

Pub. 1862.

ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS²

The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),²

The rainy clouds are filing fast below,
And wet will be the path, and wet shall we.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie. 5

Ah dear, and where is he, a year ago,
Who stepped beside and cheered us on and
on?

My sweetheart wanders far away from me,
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie. 10

The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),
And through the vale the rains go sweeping
by;

Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie. 15

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel they
O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that stray
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie).

And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to mind
The pleasant huts and herds he left be-
hind? 20

And doth he sometimes in his slumbering see
The feeding kine, and doth he think of me,
My sweetheart wandering wheresoe'er it be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to
snow 25
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),

And loud and louder roars the flood below.
Heigho! but soon in shelter shall we be:
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie,

¹ Go home, well fed; evening is here.

² The names of the cows that the girl is driving home.

Or shall he find before his term be sped, 30
Some comelier maid that he shall wish to
wed?

(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.)

For weary is work, and weary day by day
To have your comfort miles on miles away.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie. 35

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
And he returning see himself too late?
For work we must, and what we see, we see,
And God he knows, and what must be, must
be

When sweethearts wander far away from
me. 40

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

The sky behind is brightening up anew
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),

The rain is ending, and our journey too:
Heigho! aha! for here at home are we: — 45
In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.

Pub. 1862.

LIFE IS STRUGGLE

To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain,
And give oneself a world of pain;
Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,
Imperious, supple — God knows what, 5
For what's all one to have or not;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!
For 'tis not joy, it is not gain,
It is not in itself a bliss,
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us all alive. 10

To say we truly feel the pain,
And quite are sinking with the strain; —
Entirely, simply, undeceived,
Believe, and say we ne'er believed
The object, e'en were it achieved, 15
A thing we e'er had cared to keep;
With heart and soul to hold it cheap,

And then to go and try it again;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!
O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss, 20
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us still alive.

Pub. 1869.

IN A LONDON SQUARE

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,
East wind and frost are safely gone;
With zephyr mild and balmy rain
The summer comes serenely on;
Earth, air, and sun and skies combine 5
To promise all that's kind and fair: —
But thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,
The winds of March were wild and drear,
And, nearing and receding still, 11
•Spring never would, we thought, be here.
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
Had, not the less, their certain date: —
And thou, O human heart of mine, 15
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.

Pub. 1869.

ALL IS WELL

Whate'er you dream with doubt possessed,
Keep, keep it snug within your breast,
And lay you down and take your rest;
Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,
And when you wake, to work again. 5
The wind it blows, the vessel goes,
And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well: no need of care;
Though how it will, and when, and where,
We cannot see, and can't declare. 10
In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,
'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,
The wind it blows, the ship it goes,
Though where and whither, no one knows.
1869.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806-1861)

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's name is regularly linked with her husband's, but in her own right she richly deserves the place generally accorded her as the foremost poetess of England. She began writing early, and in spite of poor health published a volume of poems, anonymously, in 1826; *Prometheus Bound* in 1835; and numerous pieces in various magazines. In 1841 appeared her famous poem, *The Cry of the Children*, followed during the next few years by two volumes of poems. In 1846 she married Robert Browning and lived with him in Italy until her death fifteen years later. During these years she published *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 1850, a sonnet sequence (not translations as the title implies) inspired by and celebrating her love for Browning; *Casa Guidi Windows*, 1851; and a novel in verse, *Aurora Leigh*, 1856.

SONNETS FROM THE
PORTUGUESE

I

I thought once how Theocritus¹ had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for
years,

Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young;
And as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was
'ware,

So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the
hair;

And a voice said in mastery while I strove,
"Guess now who holds thee?" — "Death!"

I said. But there
The silver answer rang: "Not Death, but
Love."

3

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee,
art

A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages² from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to ply thy
part

Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing
through

The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chris³ is on thine head, — on mine,
the dew, —

And Death must dig the level where these
agree.

¹ The great Greek idyllic poet of the third century, B.C.
² pledges. ³ ointment.

4

Thou hast thy calling to some palace floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems, where
The dancers will break footing, from the care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and
bear

To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fulness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush, call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps as — thou must sing — alone,
aloof.

14

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say,
"I love her for her smile — her look — her
way

Of speaking gently, — for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes
brought

A sense of pleasant ease on such a day;" —
For these things in themselves, beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee, — and love
so wrought,

May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry:
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby.
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on through love's eternity.

22

When our two souls stand up erect and
strong,

Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curved point, — What bitter wrong
Can the earth do to us, that we should not
long

Be here contented? Think. In mounting
 higher,
 The angels would press on us, and aspire
 To drop some golden orb of perfect song
 Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
 Rather on earth, beloved, — where the unfit,
 Contrarious moods of men recoil away
 And isolate pure spirits, and permit
 A place to stand and love in for a day,
 With darkness and the death-hour rounding
 it.

26

I lived with visions for my company
 Instead of men and women, years ago,
 And found them gentle mates, nor thought to
 know

A sweeter music than they played to me.
 But soon their trailing purple was not free
 Of this world's dust, their lutes did silent
 grow,

And I myself grew faint and blind below
 Their vanishing eyes. Then THOU didst
 come — to be,

Beloved, what they seemed. Their shining
 fronts,

Their songs, their splendors — better, yet the
 same,

As river-water hallowed into fountains —
 Met in thee, and from out thee overcame
 My soul with satisfaction of all wants —
 Because God's gifts put man's best dreams to
 shame.

35

If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
 And be all to me? Shall I never miss
 Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss
 That comes to each in turn, nor count it
 strange,

When I look up, to drop on a new range
 Of walls and floors, another home than this?
 Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
 Filled by dead eyes too tender to know
 change?

That's hardest! If to conquer love has tried,
 To conquer grief, tries more, as all things
 prove;

For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
 Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.
 Yet love me — wilt thou? Open thine heart
 wide

And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

43

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
 I love thee to the depth and breadth and
 height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
 For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
 I love thee to the level of every day's
 Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
 I love thee purely, as men turn from Praise.
 I love thee with the passion put to use
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's
 faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
 With my lost saints, — I love thee with the
 breath,

Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God
 choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

TO GEORGE SAND *

A RECOGNITION

True genius, but true woman! dost deny
 Thy woman's nature with a manly scorn,
 And break away the gauds and armlets worn
 By weaker women in captivity?

Ah, vain denial! that revolted cry 5
 Is sobbed in by a woman's voice forlorn:

Thy woman's hair, my sister, all unshorn,
 Floats back dishevelled strength in agony,

Disproving thy man's name: and while before
 The world thou burnest in a poet fire, 10

We see thy woman's heart beat evermore
 Through the large flame. Beat purer, heart,
 and higher,

Till God unsex thee on the heavenly shore,
 Where unincarnate spirits purely aspire!

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

The poem is Mrs. Browning's eloquent protest against child labor.

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my
 brothers,

Ere the sorrow comes with years?
 They are leaning their young heads against
 their mothers,

And that cannot stop their tears.
 The young lambs are bleating in the
 meadows: 5

The young birds are chirping in the nest;
 The young fawns are playing with the
 shadows;

The young flowers are blowing toward
 the west —

But the young, young children, O my
 brothers,

They are weeping bitterly! 10

* Literary pseudonym of Armandine Dupin, the French poetess, novelist, and playwright, 1804-76.

They are weeping in the playtime of the
others,
In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in their
sorrow,

Why their tears are falling so?

The old man may weep for his to-morrow 15
Which is lost in Long Ago;

The old tree is leafless in the forest,
The old year is ending in the frost,

The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
The old hope is hardest to be lost: 20

But the young, young children, O my
brothers,

Do you ask them why they stand

Weeping sore before the bosoms of their
mothers,

In our happy Fatherland?

They look up with their pale and sunken
faces, 25

And their looks are sad to see,

For the man's hoary anguish draws and
presses

Down the cheeks of infancy;

"Your old earth," they say, "is very dreary,
Our young feet," they say, "are very
weak! 30

Few paces have we taken, yet are weary —
Our grave-rest is very far to seek:

Ask the aged why they weep, and not the
children,

For the outside earth is cold,

And we young ones stand without, in our
bewildering, 35

And the graves are for the old:

"True," say the children, "it may happen
That we die before our time:

Little Alice died last year, her grave is shapen
Like a snowball, in the rime. 40

We looked into the pit prepared to take her:
Was no room for any work in the close
clay!

From the sleep wherein she lieth none will
wake her

Crying, 'Get up, little Alice! it is day.'

If you listen by that grave, in sun and
shower, 45

With your ear down, little Alice never
cries;

Could we see her face, be sure we should not
know her,

For a smile has time for growing in her
eyes:

And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled
in

The shroud by the kirk-chime. 50

It is good when it happens," say the chil-
dren,

"That we die before our time."

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking

Death in life as best to have:

They are binding up their hearts away from
breaking, 55

With a cerement from the grave.

Go out, children, from the mine and from the
city,

Sing out, children, as the little thrushes
do;

Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-cowslips
pretty,

Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let
them through! 60

But they answer, "Are your cowslips of the
meadows

Like our weeds anear the mine?

Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-
shadows,

From your pleasures fair and fine!

"For oh," say the children, "we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap; 66

If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.

Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our faces, trying to go; 70

And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as
snow.

For, all day, we drag our burden tiring,
Through the coal-dark, underground;

Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron 75
In the factories, round and round.

"For, all day, the wheels are droning,
turning;

Their wind comes in our faces,

Till our hearts turn, our heads, with pulses
burning,

And the walls turn in their places: 80

Turns the sky in the high window, blank and
reeling,

Turns the long light that drops adown
the wall,

Turn the black flies that crawl along the
ceiling:

All are turning, all the day, and we with
all.

And all day the iron wheels are droning: 85
And sometimes we could pray,

'O ye wheels,' (breaking out in a mad
moaning)

'Stop! be silent for to-day!'"

Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other
breathing

For a moment, mouth to mouth! 90

Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh
wreathing

Of their tender human youth!

Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:

Let them prove their living souls against the
notion 95

That they live in you, or under you,
O wheels!

Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;

And the children's souls, which God is calling
sunward,

Spin on blindly in the dark. 100

Now tell the poor young children, O my
brothers,

To look up to Him and pray;

So the blessed One who blesseth all the others,
Will bless them another day.

They answer, "Who is God that He should
hear us, 105

While the rushing of the iron wheels is
stirred?

When we sob aloud, the human creatures
near us

Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a
word.

And we hear not (for the wheels in their
resounding)

Strangers speaking at the door: 110

Is it likely God, with angels singing round
Him,

Hears our weeping any more?

"Two words, indeed, of praying we remem-
ber;

And at midnight's hour of harm,

'Our Father,' looking upward in the cham-
ber, 115

We say softly for a charm.

We know no other words, except 'Our
Father,'

And we think that, in some pause of
angels' song,

God may pluck them with the silence sweet
to gather,

And hold both within His right hand
which is strong. 120

'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would
surely

(For they call Him good and mild)

Answer, smiling down the steep world very
purely,

'Come and rest with me, my child.'

"But no!" say the children, weeping
faster, 125

"He is speechless as a stone:

And they tell us, of His image is the master
Who commands us to work on.

Go to!" say the children, — "Up in Heaven,
Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all
we find: 130

Do not mock us; grief has made us un-
believing:

We look up for God, but tears have
made us blind."

Do you hear the children weeping and dis-
proving,

O my brothers, what ye preach?

For God's possible is taught by His world's
loving, 135

And the children doubt of each.

And well may the children weep before you!

They are weary ere they run;

They have never seen the sunshine, nor the
glory

Which is brighter than the sun: 140

They know the grief of man, without its
wisdom;

They sink in man's despair, without its
calm;

And slaves, without the liberty in Christ-
dom,

Are martyrs, by the pang without the
palm:

Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievably 145

The harvest of its memories cannot
reap, —

Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
Let them weep! let them weep!

They look up with their pale and sunken
faces,

And their look is dread to see, 150

For they mind you of their angels in high
places,

With eyes turned on Deity.

"How long," they say, "how long, O cruel
nation,

Will you stand, to move the world, on a
child's heart, —

Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpi-
tation, 155

And tread onward to your throne amid
the mart?

Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path!

But the child's sob in the silence curses
deeper

Than the strong man in his wrath." 160

EMILY BRONTE (1818-1848)

Emily Bronte, sister of the more famous Charlotte, is the author of *Wuthering Heights*, 1848, a highly original, impressive novel, reflective in part of the life on the moors that she herself led as a child. Her poems, often halty in technique, are the remarkable outpourings of a soul sincere, aloof, and courageous.

STANZAS

Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with
me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and
learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be:

To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region; 5
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality, 10
And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be
leading:

It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are
feeding; 15
Where the wild wind blows on the moun-
tain side.

THE OLD STOIC

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And Love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream,
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer 5
That moves my lips for me
Is, "Leave the heart that now I bear
And give me liberty!"

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore; 10
In life and death, a chainless soul,
With courage to endure.

LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled
sphere:

I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from
fear.

O God within my breast, 5
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life — that in me has rest,
As I — undying Life — have power in thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably
vain; 10

Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thine infinity;
So surely anchored on 15
The stedfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates; and 20
rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death, 25
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou — THOU art Being and Breath,
And what THOU art may never be de-
stroyed.

EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809-1883)

Fitzgerald, an original, skeptical man of great talent, is remembered as the outspoken friend of most of the great English writers of his time; as a writer of many interesting letters; as a translator of Calderón, Æschylus, and Sophocles; and, especially, as the translator of Omar Khayyám's *Rubáiyát*. He was at Cambridge University at the same time as Thackeray and Tennyson. Most of his life thereafter, with the exception of a brief, unhappy marriage, he lived alone in and near London, studying what he liked, and writing.

RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM
OF NAISHÁPÚR

I

Wake! For the Sun who scattered into
flight
The Stars before him from the Field of
Night,
Drives Night along with them from
Heav'n, and strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

2

Before the phantom of False morning ² died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
"When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?"

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood
before
The Tavern shouted — "Open then the door!
You know how little while we have to
stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

4

Now the New Year ² reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES ³ on
the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground
suspIRES.⁴

5

Iram ⁵ indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's ⁶ Sev'n-ringed Cup ⁷ where
no one knows;
But still a Ruby gushes from the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

¹ The "false dawn" of the East, a light seen on the horizon about an hour before the true dawn.

² Here, springtime.

³ See Exodus, iv, 6; the reference in this and the next line is to the blossoms in spring.

⁴ "According to [the Persians] the healing power of Jesus resided in his breath." (Fitzgerald.)

⁵ A Persian garden that sank in the sands of Arabia.

⁶ Ancient king of Persia.

⁷ It "was typical of the seven heavens, seven planets, seven seas, etc., and was a divining cup." (Fitzgerald.)

6

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Péhlevi,¹ with "Wine! Wine!
Wine!
Red Wine!" — the Nightingale cries to the
Rose
That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter — and the Bird is on the Wing.

*8

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by
drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

9

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you
say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yester-
day?
And this first Summer month that brings
the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

10

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú? ²
Let Zál and Rustum ³ thunder as they
will,
Or Hátim ⁴ call to Supper — heed not you.

11

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is for-
got —
And Peace to Máhmúd ⁵ on his golden
Throne!

¹ Sanscrit, the language of old Persian literature.

² Famous Persians.

³ Cf. Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*. Rustum, Zál's son, was the Persian Hercules.

⁴ He was generosity personified.

⁵ The Sultan.

12

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

13

Some for the Glories of This World; and
some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

14

Look to the blowing Rose about us — "Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure¹ on the Garden
throw."

15

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like
Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

16

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts
upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two — was gone.

17

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

18

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank
deep:
And Bahrá²m, that great Hunter — the
Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his
Sleep.

19

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar
bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely
Head.

¹ "The rose's golden centre." (Fitzgerald.)

² An ancient king, who sank in a swamp while hunting.

20

And thus reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

21

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the cup that clears
To-day of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow! — Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand
Years.¹

22

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time has prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two
before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

23

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of
Earth
Descend — ourselves to make a Couch — for
whom?

24

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and —
sans End!

25

Alike for those who for To-day prepare,
And those that after some To-morrow stare,
A Muezzín² from the Tower of Darkness
cries,
"Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor
There."

26

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to
Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopt
with Dust.

27

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

¹ "A thousand years to each planet." (Fitzgerald.)

² The crier who summons the faithful to prayer.

28

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand wrought to make it
grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I
reaped —
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

29

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

30

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

31

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh
Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn ¹ sate,
And many a Knot unravelled by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

32

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I could not
see:
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was — and then no more of THEE and
ME.

33

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that
mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs re-
vealed
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

34

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without — "THE ME WITHIN THEE
BLIND!"

35

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmured — "While
you live,
Drink! — for, once dead, you never shall
return."

¹ "Lord of the seventh heaven." (Fitzgerald.)

36

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answered, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I
kissed,
How many Kisses might it take — and give!

37

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmured — "Gently, Brother, gently
pray!" ¹

38

Listen — a moment listen! — Of the same
Poor Earth from which that Human Whisper
came
The luckless Mould in which Mankind was
cast
They did compose, and called him by the
name.

39

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
For Earth to drink of, ² but may steal below
To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden — far beneath, and long ago.

40

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
To Earth invert you like an empty Cup.

41

Perplex no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

42

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in — Yes;
Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTER-
DAY
You were — TO-MORROW you shall not be
less.

43

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff — you shall not
shrink.

¹ "The clay from which the bowl is made was once
Man." (Fitzgerald.)

² A Persian custom.

44

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Wer't not a Shame — wer't not a Shame
for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

45

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one-day's rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death address;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrásh¹
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

46

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no
more;
The Eternal Sáki² from that Bowl has
poured
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

47

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh but the long long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the SEV'N SEAS should heed a pebble-cast.

48

A Moment's Halt — a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste —
And Lo! — the phantom Caravan has
reached
The NOTHING it set out from — Oh, make
haste!

49

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET — quick about it, Friend!
A Hair perhaps divides the False and
True —
And upon what, prithee, does Life depend?

50

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue —
Could you but find it — to the Treasure-
house,
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

51

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's
veins
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi;³ and
They change and perish all — but He re-
mains;

¹ Servant. ² Wine-pourer.
³ "From fish to moon." (Fitzgerald.)

52

A moment guessed — then back behind the
Fold
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama rolled
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He does Himself contrive, enact, behold.

53

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening
Door,
You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You —
how then
TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no
more?

54

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pur-
suit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

55

You know, my Friends, with what a brave
Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

56

For "Is" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule
And Line,
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

57

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?¹ —
Nay,
'Twas only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

58

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel
Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas — the Grape!

59

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

¹ Omar was a profound mathematician, and at Jamshyd's request helped to correct the calendar.

60

The mighty Mahmūd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde¹
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind
Sword.

61

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who
dare
Blasphe^me the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse — why, then, Who set it
there?

62

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on
trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup — when crumbled into Dust!

63

O threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain, — *This* Life
flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

64

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness
through
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

65

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from
Sleep
They told their fellows, and to Sleep returned.

66

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answered "I Myself am Heav'n and
Hell."

67

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow of a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Our-
selves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

¹ "Alluding to Sultan Mahmūd's conquest of India."
(Fitzgerald.)

68

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with this Sun-illuminated Lantern
held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

69

Impotent Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Checker-board of Nights and
Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and
slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

70

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes;
And He that tossed you down into the
Field,
He knows about it all — *HE* knows — *HE*
knows!

(71)

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

72

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for *It*
As impotently rolls as you or I.

73

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last
Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed:
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

74

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
Drink! for you know not whence you came,
nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor
where.

75

I tell you this — When, started from the
Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n Parwīn¹ and Mushtari² they
flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

¹ The Pleiades.² Jupiter.

76

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being — let the Dervish¹ flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

77

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

78

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

79

What, from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent us dross-allayed —
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer — Oh the sorry trade!

80

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

81

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blackened — Man's Forgiveness give —
and take!

82

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán² away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

83

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and
some
Listened perhaps, but never talked at all.

84

Said one among them — "Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure shoulded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

¹ A fervent Mohammedan.
² The month of fasting.

85

Then said a Second — "Ne'er a peevish
Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank
in joy:
And He that with his hand the Vessel
made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

86

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter
shake?"

87

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot —
I think a Súfi¹ pipkin — waxing hot —
"All this of Pot and Potter — Tell me
then,
Who makes — Who sells — Who buys —
Who is the Pot?"

88

"Why," said another, "Some there are who
tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making —
Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

89

"Well," murmured one, "Let whoso make or
buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by."

90

So while the Vessels one by one were speak-
ing,
The little Moon² looked in that all were
seeking:
And then they jogged each other, "Bro-
ther! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot³
a-creaking!"

91

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has
died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

¹ A Persian pantheist. ² The end of Ramazán.
³ Used for carrying the wine-jars.

92

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

93

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in Men's eyes much
wrong:

Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

94

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore?

And then and then came Spring, and Rose-
in-hand

My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

95

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honor —
Well,

I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

96

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the
Rose!

That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript
should close!

The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who
knows!

97

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed, revealed,
To which the fainting Traveller might
spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

98

Would but some winged Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

(99)

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

100

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden — and for *one* in
vain!

101

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the
Grass,
And in your blissful errand reach the spot
Where I made One — turn down an empty
Glass!

TAMÁM

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828–1882)

Rossetti, poet and painter, was three-quarters Italian. His father, Professor of Italian in King's College, University of London, had come to England, a self-exiled revolutionist, four years before the poet's birth in 1828. His mother was the daughter of an Italian who had married an English girl.

Rossetti received his education at King's College School and at home, with his sister, Christina, and his brother, William Michael. At fourteen, he began the study of painting, continuing at the same time the writing of verses, which he had done since childhood. At twenty, through Ford Madox Brown, his instructor in art, he became acquainted with Holman Hunt, Millais, Woolner, and other painters. They organized the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, whose members sought to revive great painting in England by going back for instruction and inspiration to the Italian masters before Raphael. Many of the Pre-Raphaelites, like Rossetti, wrote as well as painted. For a while they published a magazine, *The Germ*, of which William Michael Rossetti was editor. Here, in 1848, appeared *The Blessed Damsel*, which Rossetti had written the year before, when he was nineteen.

In 1851, Rossetti became engaged to Elizabeth Siddal, a girl in a milliner's shop. They were not married until 1860, partly because of her poor health, partly because of lack of money. During this time, Rossetti wrote and painted, supported largely by both the patronage and encouragement of Ruskin. In 1861, he published *Dante and his Circle*, translations of early Italian poets. In 1862, his wife died from an accidental overdose of medicine. In his grief Rossetti buried with her the manuscript of all his unpublished poems. These were recovered, with his consent, some

seven years later, and printed in his *Collected Poems*, 1870. During the remainder of his life, Rossetti suffered much from ill health and from the drugs that he used to relieve his pain. He lived more and more in isolation. In 1881, he brought out *Ballads and Sonnets*, the third and last volume of his published work. He died April 10, 1882.

In Rossetti can be seen the chief qualities of Pre-Raphaelite artists. They used much detail, but it was simple, carefully selected detail that would appeal to the imagination and enhance the strange, the mystical, or the supernatural effect that they wished to produce. They were concrete in their descriptions, rich in their coloring. In short, they tried to create beauty in a world which they thought was materialistic and matter-of-fact; and this they felt they could do best when they took their themes or inspiration from the Middle Ages.

Swinburne in *Essays and Studies*, and Pater in *Appreciations*, have written excellent essays on Rossetti.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

According to Hall Caine, Rossetti said of this poem: "I saw that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and so I determined to reverse the conditions, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." The reference is, of course, to *The Raven*.

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the golden bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand, 5
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn; 10
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone 15
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
— Yet now, and in this place, 20
Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house 25
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun. 30

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge

The void, as low as where this earth 35
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names; 40
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made 45
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce 50
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon 55
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together. 60

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side 65
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed? 70
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,

- I'll take his hand and go with him 75
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.
- "We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.
- "We two will lie i' the shadow of 85
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.
- "And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause, 95
Or some new thing to know."
- (Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity 100
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)
- "We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names 105
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.
- "Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth, white like flame 110
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.
- "He shall fear, haply, and be dumb: 115
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak. 120
- "Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round Whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles;
- And angels meeting us shall sing 125
To their citherns and citoles.
- "There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, — only to be, 130
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he."
- She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild, —
"All this is when he comes." She ceased. 135
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.
- (I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres: 140
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)
1847.

SISTER HELEN

- "Why did you melt your waxen man,"
Sister Helen?
To-day is the third since you began."
"The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother." 5
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven!*)
- "But if you have done your work aright,
Sister Helen,
You'll let me play, for you said I might." 10
"Be very still in your play to-night,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven!*)
- "You said it must melt ere vesper-bell, 15
Sister Helen;
If now it be molten, all is well."
"Even so, — nay, peace! you cannot tell,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,* 20
What is this, between Hell and Heaven?)
- "Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,
Sister Helen;
How like dead folk he has dropped away!"
"Nay now, of the dead what can you say, 25

1 According to an old superstition, a woman might cause her faithless lover's life to dwindle by melting a wax image of him slowly in front of a fire.

Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven?)

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,
 Sister Helen, 30
 Shines through the thinned wax red as blood!"
 "Nay now, when looked you yet on blood,
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick and
 sore, 36
 Sister Helen,
 And I'll play without the gallery door."
 "Aye, let me rest, — I'll lie on the floor,
 Little brother." 40
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Here high up in the balcony,
 Sister Helen,
 The moon flies face to face with me." 45
 "Aye, look and say whatever you see,
 Little brother."
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake, 50
 Sister Helen;
 In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."
 "Hush, heard you a horse-tread as you spake,
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother, 55
What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven?)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,
 Sister Helen,
 Three horsemen that ride terribly."
 "Little brother, whence come the three, 60
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
Whence should they come, between Hell and Heaven?)

"They come by the hill-verge from Boyne
 Bar,
 Sister Helen, 65
 And one draws nigh, but two are afar."
 "Look, look, do you know them who they are,
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
Who should they be, between Hell and Heaven?) 70

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,
 Sister Helen,

For I know the white mane on the blast."
 "The hour has come, has come at last,
 Little brother!" 75
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He has made a sign and called 'Halloo!'
 Sister Helen,
 And he says that he would speak with you."
 "Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew, 81
 Little brother."
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
Why laughs she thus, between Hell and Heaven!)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry, 85
 Sister Helen,
 That Keith of Ewern's like to die."
 "And he and thou, and thou and I,
 Little brother." 90
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
And they and we, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,
 Sister Helen,
 He sickened, and lies since then forlorn." 95
 "For bridegroom's side is the bride a thorn, 95
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Three days and nights he has lain abed,
 Sister Helen, 100
 And he prays in torment to be dead."
 "The thing may chance, if he have prayed,
 Little brother!"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
If he have prayed, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day, 106
 Sister Helen,
 That you should take your curse away."
 "My prayer was heard, — he need but pray,
 Little brother!" 110
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?)

"But he says, till you take back your ban,
 Sister Helen,
 His soul would pass, yet never can." 115
 "Nay then, shall I slay a living man,
 Little brother?"
 (O Mother, Mary Mother,
A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But he calls forever on your name, 120
 Sister Helen,
 And says that he melts before a flame."
 "My heart for his pleasure fared the same,

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother, 125
Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white plume on the blast."

"The hour, the sweet hour I forecast, 130
Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his horse,
Sister Helen; 135
But his words are drowned in the wind's
course."

"Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear perforce,
Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What word now heard, between Hell and Heaven?) 140

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,
Sister Helen,

Is ever to see you ere he die."

"In all that his soul sees, there am I,
Little brother!" 145

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
The soul's one sight, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,
Sister Helen,

And bids you mind the banks of Boyne." 150

"What else he broke will he ever join,

Little brother!"
(O Mother, Mary Mother,
No, never joined, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He yields you these and craves full fain, 155
Sister Helen,

You pardon him in his mortal pain."

"What else he took will he give again,

Little brother!"
(O Mother, Mary Mother, 160
Not twice to give, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He calls your name in an agony,
Sister Helen,

That even dead Love must weep to see."

"Hate, born of Love, is blind as he, 165
Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Love turned to hate, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides fast,
Sister Helen, 170

For I know the white hair on the blast."

"The short, short hour will soon be past,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Will soon be past, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He looks at me and he tries to speak, 176
Sister Helen,

But oh his voice is sad and weak!"

"What here should the mighty Baron seek,
Little brother?" 180

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?)

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,
Sister Helen,

The body dies, but the soul shall live." 185

"Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,

Little brother!"
(O Mother, Mary Mother,
As she forgives, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would
rive, 190

Sister Helen,

To save his dear son's soul alive."

"Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,

Little brother!"
(O Mother, Mary Mother, 195
Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!)

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,

Sister Helen,

To go with him for the love of God!"

"The way is long to his son's abode, 200

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
The way is long, between Hell and Heaven!)

"A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,
Sister Helen, 205

So darkly clad, I saw her not."

"See her now or never see aught,

Little brother!"
(O Mother, Mary Mother, 210
What more to see, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Her hood falls back, and the moon shines
fair,

Sister Helen,
On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."

"Blest hour of my power and her despair,
Little brother!" 215

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Hour blest and banned, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride did
glow,

Sister Helen,

"Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago." 220
 "One morn for pride and three days for woe,
 Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Three days, three nights, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"Her clasped hands stretch from her bending
 head, 225

Sister Helen;
 With the loud wind's wail her sobs are wed."
 "What wedding-strains hath her bridal-
 bed,

Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,* 230
What strain but death's, between Hell and
Heaven?)

"She may not speak, she sinks in a swoon,
 Sister Helen, —

She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."
 "Oh! might I but hear her soul's blithe
 tune, 235

Little brother!"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and Heaven!)

"They've caught her to Westholm's saddle-
 bow,

Sister Helen, 240
 And her moonlit hair gleams white in its
 flow."

"Let it turn whiter than winter snow,
 Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Woe-withered gold, between Hell and
Heaven!) 245

"O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,
 Sister Helen;

More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."
 "No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,

Little brother!" 250
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
His dying knell, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,
 Sister Helen;

Is it in the sky or in the ground?" 255
 "Say, have they turned their horses round,

Little brother?"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What would she more, between Hell and
Heaven?)

"They have raised the old man from his
 knee, 260

Sister Helen,

And they ride in silence hastily."

"More fast the naked soul doth flee,
 Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,* 265
The naked soul, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Flank to flank are the three steeds gone,
 Sister Helen,

But the lady's dark steed goes alone."
 "And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath
 flown, 270

Little brother."
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
The lonely ghost, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,
 Sister Helen, 275

And weary sad they look by the hill."
 "But he and I are sadder still,

Little brother!"
 (*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!) 280

"See, see, the wax has dropped from its
 place,

Sister Helen,
 And the flames are winning up apace!"

"Yet here they burn but for a space,
 Little brother!" 285

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!)

"Ah! what white thing at the door has
 crossed,

Sister Helen,
 Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?" 290

"A soul that's lost as mine is lost,
 Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven!)

Pub. 1853.

THE BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES

From FRANÇOIS VILLON

Tell me now in what hidden way is
 Lady Flora the lovely Roman?

Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thaïs,
 Neither of them the fairer woman?

Where is Echo, beheld of no man, 5
 Only heard on river and mere, —

She whose beauty was more than
 human? . . .

But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Héloïse, the learned nun,
 For whose sake Abeillard, I ween, 10

Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
 (From Love he won such dule and teen!¹)
 And where, I pray you, is the Queen
 Who willed that Buridan should steer
 Sewed in a sack's mouth down the
 Seine? . . . 15
 But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
 With a voice like any mermaid, —
 Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
 And Ermengarde the lady of Maine, — 20
 And that good Joan whom Englishmen
 At Rouen doomed and burned her there, —
 Mother of God, where are they then? . . .
 But where are the snows of yester-year?

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord, 25
 Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
 Except with this for an overword, —
 "But where are the snows of yester-year?"

TROY TOWN

Heavenborn Helen, Sparta's queen,
 (O Troy Town!)
 Had two breasts of heavenly sheen,
 The sun and moon of the heart's desire:
 All Love's lordship lay between. 5
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Helen knelt at Venus' shrine,
 (O Troy Town!)
 Saying "A little gift is mine, 10
 A little gift for a heart's desire.
 Hear me speak and make me a sign!
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

"Look, I bring thee a carven cup; 15
 (O Troy Town!)
 See it here as I hold it up, —
 Shaped it is to the heart's desire,
 Fit to fill when the gods would sup.
 (O Troy's down, 20
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

"It was moulded like my breast;
 (O Troy Town!)
 He that sees it may not rest,
 Rest at all for his heart's desire. 25
 O give ear to my heart's behest!
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

"See my breast, how like it is;
 (O Troy Town!) 30
 See it bare for the air to kiss!
 Is the cup to thy heart's desire?
 O for the breast, O make it his!
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!) 35

"Yea, for my bosom here I sue:
 (O Troy Town!)
 Thou must give it where 'tis due,
 Give it there to the heart's desire.
 Whom do I give my bosom to? 40
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

"Each twin breast is an apple sweet!
 (O Troy Town!)
 Once an apple stirred the beat 45
 Of thy heart with the heart's desire:
 Say, who brought it then to thy feet?
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

"They that claimed it then were
 three: 50
 (O Troy Town!)
 For thy sake two hearts did he
 Make forlorn of the heart's desire.
 Do for him as he did for thee!
 (O Troy's down, 55
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

"Mine are apples grown to the south,
 (O Troy Town!)
 Grown to taste in the days of drouth,
 Taste and waste to the heart's desire: 60
 Mine are apples meet for his mouth!"
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Venus looked on Helen's gift,
 (O Troy Town!) 65
 Looked and smiled with subtle drift,
 Saw the work of her heart's desire: —
 "There thou kneel'st for Love to lift!"
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!) 70

Venus looked in Helen's face,
 (O Troy Town!)
 Knew far off an hour and place,
 And fire lit from the heart's desire:
 Laughed and said, "Thy gift hath
 grace!" 75
 (O Troy's down,
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Cupid looked on Helen's breast,
 (*O Troy Town!*)
 Saw the heart within its nest, 80
 Saw the flame of the heart's desire, —
 Marked his arrow's burning crest.
 (*O Troy's down,*
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Cupid took another dart, 85
 (*O Troy Town!*)
 Fledged it for another heart,
 Winged the shaft with the heart's desire,
 Drew the string and said, "Depart!"
 (*O Troy's down,* 90
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Paris turned upon his bed,
 (*O Troy Town!*)
 Turned upon his bed and said,
 Dead at heart with the heart's desire, — 95
 "O to clasp her golden head!"
 (*O Troy's down,*
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Pub. 1870.

THE HOUSE OF LIFE¹

THE SONNET

A Sonnet is a moment's monument, —
 Memorial from the Soul's eternity
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that it
 be,

Whether for lustral rite² or dire portent,
 Of its own arduous fulness reverent:
 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
 As Day or Night may rule; and let Time
 see

Its flowering crest impearled and orient.
 A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals
 The soul, — its converse, to what Power
 'tis due: —

Whether for tribute to the august appeals
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
 It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's³ cavernous
 breath,
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.

4. LOVE-SIGHT

When do I see thee most, beloved one?
 When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
 Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
 The worship of that Love through thee made
 known?

¹ The title is taken from astrology, according to which the heavens were divided into twelve houses, the first of which, on the eastern horizon, was called the house of the ascendant, or the house of life.

² Purification.

³ At the Styx, where the soul had to pay Charon for ferrying across.

Or when in the dusk hours (we two alone),
 Close kissed and eloquent of still replies,
 Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage
 lies,
 And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
 O love, my love! if I no more should see
 Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
 Nor image of thine eyes in any spring, —
 How then should sound upon Life's darken-
 ing slope
 The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of
 Hope,
 The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

19. SILENT NOON

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, —
 The finger-points look through like rosy
 blooms:
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture
 gleams and glooms
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and
 amass.
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
 Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge,
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the haw-
 thorn-hedge.
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
 Deep in the sun-searched growths the
 dragon-fly
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the
 sky: —
 So this winged hour is dropped to us from
 above.
 Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless
 dower,
 This close-companioned, inarticulate hour
 When twofold silence was the song of love.

71, 72, 73. THE CHOICE

I

Eat thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt
 die.
 Surely the earth, that's wise being very
 old,
 Needs not our help. Then loose me, love,
 and hold
 Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I
 May pour for thee this golden wine, brim-
 high,
 Till round the glass thy fingers glow like
 gold.
 We'll drown all hours: thy song, while
 hours are tolled,
 Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing
 sky.
 Now kiss, and think that there are really
 those,

My own high-bosomed beauty, who increase

Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose our way!

Through many years they toil; then on a day

They die not, — for their life was death, — but cease;

And round their narrow lips the mould falls close.

2

Watch thou and fear; to-morrow thou shalt die.

Or art thou sure thou shalt have time for death?

Is not the day which God's word promiseth

To come man knows not when? In yonder sky,

Now while we speak, the sun speeds forth: can I

Or thou assure him of his goal? God's breath

Even at this moment haply quickeneth The air to a flame; till spirits, always nigh Though screened and hid, shall walk the daylight here.

And dost thou prate of all that man shall do? Canst thou, who hast but plagues, presume to be

Glad in his gladness that comes after thee?

Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in 'Hell? Go to:

Cover thy countenance, and watch, and fear.

3

Think thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt die.

Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon the shore,

Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is all gone o'er;

Up all his years, steeply, with strain and sigh, Man clomb until he touched the truth; and I,

Even I, am he whom it was destined for." How should this be? Art thou, then, so much more

Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst reap thereby?

Nay, come up hither. From this wave-washed mound

Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me; Then reach on with thy thought till it be drowned.

Miles and miles distant though the last line be,

And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,

Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea.

85. VAIN VIRTUES

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?

None of the sins, — but this and that fair deed

Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.

These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell

Might once have sainted; whom the fiends compel

Together now, in snake-bound shuddering sheaves

Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves Their refuse maidenhood abominable.

Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit, Whose names, half entered in the book of Life,

Were God's desire at noon. And as their hair

And eyes sink last, the Torturer designs no whit

To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,

The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.

86. LOST DAYS

The lost days of my life until to-day,

What were they, could I see them on the street

Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat

Sown once for food but trodden into clay?

Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?

Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?

Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat

The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?

I do not see them here; but after death

God knows I know the faces I shall see, Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.

"I am thyself, — what hast thou done to me?"

"And I — and I — thyself" (lo! each one saith),

"And thou thyself to all eternity!"

97. A SUPERScription

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;

I am also called No-more, Too-late, Fare-well;

Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell

Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;
 Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
 Which had Life's form and Love's, but by
 my spell

Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
 Of ultimate things unuttered the frail
 screen.

Mark me, how still I am! But should there
 dart

One moment through thy soul the soft
 surprise

Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath
 of sighs, —

Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
 Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart

Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

101. THE ONE HOPE

When vain desire at last and vain regret
 Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
 What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
 And teach the forgetful to forget?

Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long
 unmet, —

Or may the soul at once in a green plain
 Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-
 fountain

And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet?
 Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air

Between the scripted petals softly
 blown

Peers breathless for the gift of grace un-
 known, —

Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er
 But only the one Hope's one name be
 there, —

Not less nor more, but even that word
 alone.

THE CLOUD CONFINES

The day is dark and the night
 To him that would search their heart;
 No lips of cloud that will part

Nor morning song in the light:
 Only, gazing alone, 5

To him wild shadows are shown,
 Deep under deep unknown

And height above unknown height.

Still we say as we go, —

"Strange to think by the way, 10

Whatever there is to know,

That shall we know one day."

The Past is over and fled;

Named new, we name it the old;

Thereof some tale hath been told 15
 But no word comes from the dead;

Whether at all they be,

Or whether as bond or free,

Or whether they too were we,

Or by what spell they have sped. 20

Still we say as we go, —

"Strange to think by the way,

Whatever there is to know,

That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of hate 25

That beats in thy breast, O Time? —

Red strife from the furthest prime,

And anguish of fierce debate;

War that shatters her slain,

And peace that grinds them as grain, 30

And eyes fixed ever in vain

On the pitiless eyes of Fate.

Still we say as we go, —

"Strange to think by the way,

Whatever there is to know, 35

That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of love

That bleeds in thy breast, O Man? —

Thy kisses snatched 'neath the ban

Of fangs that mock them above; 40

Thy bells prolonged unto knells,

Thy hope that a breath dispels,

Thy bitter forlorn farewells

And the empty echoes thereof?

Still we say as we go, — 45

"Strange to think by the way,

Whatever there is to know,

That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,

Aweary with all its wings; 50

And oh! the song the sea sings

Is dark everlastingly.

Our past is clean forgot,

Our present is and is not,

Our future's a sealed seedplot, 55

And what betwixt them are we? —

We who say as we go, —

"Strange to think by the way,

Whatever there is to know

That shall we know one day." 60

WILLIAM MORRIS (1834-1896)

William Morris was at Oxford in the years when Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his friends were starting their Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in London. He and his friend Edward Burne-Jones became the sponsors for a similar movement back to the Middle Ages for inspiration in art and poetry. Morris was younger than Rossetti, having been born in 1834. The two became intimate friends. Morris studied painting with Rossetti, and later, when he came to London, the two were members of a firm which Morris directed with the object of bringing beautiful design and decoration into English churches and homes. The firm dealt in carving, stained glass, metal-work, chintzes, carpets, and furniture. All his life Morris remained interested in handicrafts of all sorts. He set up looms for weaving tapestry. He set up his own printing-press. He learned to write a beautiful hand like the medieval scribes. This interest in reviving the fine traditions of industry, of which the great tradition was a workman's joy in the work of his hands, led him to protest against the modern industrial system in much the same way as Ruskin. Morris, however, believed for a time that the way to bring back medieval conditions of work inspired by art was through socialism. He joined the Social Democratic Federation in 1883, and devoted many years to speaking, writing, and editing papers in behalf of the cause of social justice. He died in 1896.

Morris began his career as poet in the full tide of the medieval revival. His first volume, *The Defence of Guenevere* (1858), contains work of extraordinary originality — bits of medieval psychology and realism which are much more penetrating than Tennyson's *Idylls*. Most of Morris's poetic achievement, however, consisted in retelling the old stories of the race. The most famous of his works is *The Earthly Paradise*. Two groups of voyagers, Greeks and Northmen, unite to exchange month by month the old myths of their people. Other longer narratives in verse to which Morris set his hand are *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867), and *Sigurd the Volsung* (1876). He translated the *Æneid* and the *Odyssey*, as well as some of the Icelandic sagas and *Beowulf*. As a socialist he lectured on the connection between art and society, in *Hopes and Fears for Art*, and wrote a Utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*. His last phase of literary activity was marked by the prose romances, *The House of the Wolfings* (1889), and its successors, in which he pictured the early life of the Germanic tribes.

Altogether the bulk of Morris's work in prose and verse is very great. Most of it owes its inspiration to the literature of the past rather than the life of the present. To Morris, poetry was a decoration of life, and like other arts a matter of sound craftsmanship. He once wrote that, if a man could not compose an epic while he was weaving a tapestry, he was no good at all. But if Morris as a poet seems withdrawn from the life of his time, there must not be forgotten the devotion with which he set himself to work out its social problem and create a better world.

The Collected Works of William Morris are published by Longmans. The most complete biography is by J. W. Mackail, in two volumes (Longmans).

THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

But, knowing now that they would have her
speak,

She threw her wet hair backward from her
brow,

Her hand close to her mouth touching her
cheek,

As though she had had there a shameful
blow,

And feeling it shameful to feel ought but
shame

All through her heart, yet felt her cheek⁵
burned so,

She must a little touch it; like one lame
She walked away from Gauwaine, with her
head

Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame

The tears dried quick; she stopped at last
and said:

10

"O knights and lords, it seems but little skill
To talk of well-known things past now and
dead.

"God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,
And pray you all forgiveness heartily!
Because you must be right such great lords —
still

15

"Listen, suppose your time were come to die,
And you were quite alone and very weak;
Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

"The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak
Of river through your broad lands running
well:

20

Suppose a hush should come, then some one
speak:

"One of these cloths is heaven, and one is
hell,

Now choose one cloth for ever, which they be,
I will not tell you, you must somehow tell

"Of your own strength and mightness;
here, see!" 25
Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your eyes,
At foot of your familiar bed to see

"A great God's angel standing, with such
dyes,
Not known on earth, on his great wings, and
hands,
Held out two ways, light from the inner
skies 30

"Showing him well, and making his com-
mands
Seem to be God's commands, moreover, too,
Holding within his hands the cloths on
wands;

"And one of these strange choosing cloths
was blue,
Wavy and long and one cut short and red; 35
No man could tell the better of the two.

"After a shivering half-hour you said,
'God help! heaven's color, the blue;' and he
said, 'hell.'
Perhaps you then would roll upon your bed,

"And cry to all good men that loved you
well, 40
'Ah Christ! if only I had known, known,
known;'
Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

"Like wisest man how all things would be,
moan,
And roll and hurt myself, and long to die,
And yet fear much to die for what was
sown. 45

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened through these
years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you
lie."

Her voice was low at first, being full of tears,
But as it cleared, it grew full loud and shrill,
Growing a windy shriek in all men's ears, 51

A ringing in their startled brains, until
She said that Gauwaine lied, then her voice
sunk,
And her great eyes began again to fill,

Though still she stood right up, and never
shrunk, 55
But spoke on bravely, glorious lady fair!
Whatever tears her full lips may have drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and wrung
her hair,
Spoke out at last with no more trace of
shame,
With passionate twisting of her body
there: 60

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot
came
To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christmas-
time
This happened; when the heralds sung his
name,

"'Son of King Ban of Benwick,' seemed to
chime
Along with all the bells that rang that day, 65
O'er the white roofs, with little change of
rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed
away,
And over me the April sunshine came,
Made very awful with black hail-clouds, yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with
flame, 70
And bowed my head down — Autumn, and
the sick
Sure knowledge things would never be the
same,

"However often Spring might be most thick
Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and I
grew
Careless of most things, let the clock tick,
tick, 75

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right
through
My eager body; while I laughed out loud,
And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any
cloud.
Behold my judges, then the cloths were
brought: 80
While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts would
crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought
By Arthur's great name and his little love,
Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever round me
move 85
Glorifying all things; for a little word,
Scarce ever meant at all, must I now prove

"Stone-cold for ever? Pray you, does the
 Lord
 Will that all folks should be quite happy and
 good?
 I love God now a little, if this cord 90

"Were broken, once for all what striving
 could
 Make me love anything in earth or heaven.
 So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn smooth
 and even,
 Down to a cool sea on a summer day; 95
 Yet still in slipping was there some small
 leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small stones
 by the way,
 Until one surely reached the sea at last,
 And felt strange new joy as the worn head
 lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed; yea all
 past 100
 Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,
 Washed utterly out by the dear waves o'er-
 cast

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships!
 Do I not know now of a day in Spring?
 No minute of that wild day ever slips 105

"From out my memory; I hear thrushes
 sing,
 And wheresoever I may be, straightway
 Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh
 sting;

"I was half mad with beauty on that day,
 And went without my ladies all alone, 110
 In a quiet garden walled round every way;

"I was right joyful of that wall of stone,
 That shut the flowers and trees up with the
 sky,
 And trebled all the beauty: to the bone,

"Yea right through to my heart, grown very
 shy 115
 With weary thoughts, it pierced, and made
 me glad;
 Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

"A little thing just then had made me
 mad;
 I dared not think, as I was wont to do,
 Sometimes, upon my beauty; if I had 120

'Held out my long hand up against the
 blue,
 And, looking on the tenderly darkened
 fingers,
 Thought that by rights one ought to see
 quite through,

"There, see you, where the soft still light
 yet lingers,
 Round by the edges; what should I have
 done, 125
 If this had joined with yellow spotted singers,

"And startling green drawn upward by the
 sun?
 But shouting, loosed out, see now! all my
 hair,
 And trancedly stood watching the west wind
 run

"With faintest half-heard breathing sound —
 why there 130
 I lose my head e'en now in doing this;
 But shortly listen — In that garden fair

"Came Launcelot walking; this is true, the
 kiss
 Wherewith we kissed in meeting that spring
 day,
 I scarce dare talk of the remembered bliss,

"When both our mouths went wandering in
 one way, 136
 And aching sorely, met among the leaves;
 Our hands being left behind strained far
 away.

"Never within a yard of my bright sleeves
 Had Launcelot come before — and now, so
 nigh! 140
 After that day why is it Guenevere grieves?

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
 Whatever happened on through all those
 years,
 God knows I speak truth, saying that you
 lie.

"Being such a lady could I weep these
 tears 145
 If this were true? A great queen such as I
 Having sinned this way, straight her con-
 science sears;

"And afterwards she liveth hatefully,
 Slaying and poisoning, certes never weeps, —
 Gauwaine be friends now, speak me lov-
 ingly. 150

"Do I not see how God's dear pity creeps
All through your frame, and trembles in your
mouth?

Remember in what grave your mother sleeps,

"Buried in some place far down in the south,
Men are forgetting as I speak to you; 155
By her head severed in that awful drouth

"Of pity that drew Agravaïne's fell blow,
I pray your pity! let me not scream out
For ever after, when the shrill winds blow

"Through half your castle-locks! let me not
shout 160
For ever after in the winter night
When you ride out alone! in battle rout

"Let not my rusting tears make your sword
light!
Ah! God of mercy how he turns away!
So, ever must I dress me to the fight, 165

"So — let God's justice work! Gauwaine,
I say,
See me hew down your proofs: yea all men
know
Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one
day,

"One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*, for so
All good knights held it after, saw — 170
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknightly outrage;
though

"You, Gauwaine, held his word without a
flaw,
This Mellyagraunce saw blood upon my
bed —
Whose blood then pray you? is there any
law

"To make a queen say why some spots of
red 175
Lie on her coverlet? or will you say,
'Your hands are white, lady, as when you
wed,

"'Where did you bleed?' and must I stam-
mer out — 'Nay,
I blush indeed, fair lord, only to rend
My sleeve up to my shoulder, where there
lay 180

"'A knife-point last night:' so must I defend
The honor of the lady Guenevere?
Not so, fair lords, even if the world should
end

"This very day, and you were judges here
Instead of God. Did you see Melly-
graunce 185
When Launcelot stood by him? what white
fear

"Curdled his blood, and how his teeth did
dance,
His side sink in? as my knight cried and said,
'Slayer of unarmed men, here is a chance!

"'Setter of traps, I pray you guard your
head, 190
By God I am so glad to fight with you,
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels lead

"'For driving weight; hurrah now! draw and
do,
For all my wounds are moving in my breast,
And I am getting mad with waiting so.' 195

"He struck his hands together o'er the beast,
Who fell down flat, and grovelled at his feet,
And groaned at being slain so young — 'at
least.'

"My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are so
fleet
At catching ladies, half-armed will I fight, 200
My left side all uncovered!' then I weet,

"Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with great
delight
Upon his knave's face; not until just then
Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

"Along the lists look to my stake and pen 205
With such a joyous smile, it made me sigh
From agony beneath my waist-chain, when

"The fight began, and to me they drew nigh;
Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,
And traversed warily, and ever high 210

"And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my
knight
Sudden threw up his sword to his left hand,
Caught it, and swung it; that was all the
fight.

"Except a spout of blood on the hot land;
For it was hottest summer; and I know 215
I wondered how the fire, while I should stand,

"And burn, against the heat, would quiver so,
Yards above my head; thus these matters
went;
Which things were only warnings of the woe

"That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce was
shent, 220
For Mellyagraunce had fought against the
Lord;
Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you be
blent

"With all this wickedness; say no rash word
Against me, being so beautiful; my eyes,
Wept all away to grey, may bring some
sword 225

"To drown you in your blood; see my breast
rise,
Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand;
And how my arms are moved in wonderful
wise,

"Yea also at my full heart's strong com-
mand,
See through my long throat how the words
go up 230
In ripples to my mouth; how in my hand

"The shadow lies like wine within a cup
Of marvellously colored gold; yea now
This little wind is rising, look you up,

"And wonder how the light is falling so 235
Within my moving tresses: will you dare,
When you have looked a little on my brow,

"To say this thing is vile? or will you care
For any plausible lies of cunning woof,
When you can see my face with no lie there

"For ever? am I not a gracious proof — 241
'But, in your chamber Launcelot was
found' —
Is there a good knight then would stand
aloof,

"When a queen says with gentle queenly
sound:
'O true as steel come now and talk with
me, 245
I love to see your step upon the ground

"Unwavering, also well I love to see
That gracious smile light up your face, and
hear
Your wonderful words, that all mean verily

"The thing they seem to mean: good
friend, so dear 250
To me in everything, come here to-night,
Or else the hours will pass most dull and
drear;

"If you come not, I fear this time I might
Get thinking over much of times gone by,
When I was young, and green hope was in
sight; 255

"For no man cares now to know why I sigh;
And no man comes to sing me pleasant songs,
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers that lie

"So thick in the gardens; therefore one so
long
To see you, Launcelot; that we may be 260
Like children once again, free from all wrongs

"Just for one night.' Did he not come to
me?
What thing could keep true Launcelot away
If I said 'come'? there was one less than
three

"In my quiet room that night, and we were
gay; 265
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and sick,
Because a bawling broke our dream up, yea

"I looked at Launcelot's face and could not
speak,
For he looked helpless too, for a little while;
Then I remember how I tried to shriek, 270

"And could not, but fell down; from tile to
tile
The stones they threw up rattled o'er my
head,
And made me dizzier; till within a while

"My maids were all about me, and my
head
On Launcelot's breast was being soothed
away 275
From its white chattering, until Launcelot
said —

"By God! I will not tell you more to-day,
Judge any way you will — what matters it?
You know quite well the story of that fray,

"How Launcelot stilled their bawling, the
mad fit 280
That caught up Gauwaine — all, all, verily,
But just that which would save me; these
things flit.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened these long
years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you
lie! 285

"All I have said is truth, by Christ's dear tears."

She would not speak another word, but stood
Turned sideways; listening, like a man who
hears

His brother's trumpet sounding through the
wood

Of his foes' lances. She leaned eagerly, 290
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as she
could

At last hear something really; joyfully
Her cheek grew crimson, as the headlong
speed

Of the roan charger drew all men to see,
The knight who came was Launcelot at good
need. 295

Pub. 1858.

THE EVE OF CRECY

Gold on her head, and gold on her feet,
And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,
And a golden girdle round my sweet; —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Margaret's maids are fair to see, 5
Freshly dressed and pleasantly;
Margaret's hair falls down to her knee; —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
I would kiss the place where the gold hems
meet, 10
And the golden girdle round my sweet —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Ah me! I have never touched her hand;
When the arriere-ban¹ goes through the
land,
Six basnets² under my pennon stand; — 15
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

And many an one grins under his hood:
"Sir Lambert de Bois, with all his men
good,
Has neither food nor firewood;" —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite. 20

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
And the golden girdle of my sweet,
And thereabouts where the gold hems
meet; —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

¹ The summons of a French king calling his vassals
to war.
² helmets.

Yet even now it is good to think, 25
While my few poor varlets grumble and drink
In my desolate hall, where the fires sink, —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,
In glory of gold and glory of hair, 30
And glory of glorious face most fair; —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,
Because this battle draweth near:
For what have I to lose or fear? — 35
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

For, look you, my horse is good to prance
A right fair measure in this war-dance,
Before the eyes of Philip of France; —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite. 40

And sometime it may hap, perdie,
While my new towers stand up three and
three,
And my hall gets painted fair to see —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite —

That folks may say: "Times change, by the
rood, 45
For Lambert, banneret of the wood,
Has heaps of food and firewood; —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

"And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood
Of a damsel of right noble blood;" 50
St. Ives, for Lambert of the wood! —
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.
Pub. 1858.

THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

Had she come all the way for this,
To part at last without a kiss?
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain
That her own eyes might see him slain
Beside the haystack in the floods? 5

Along the dripping leafless woods,
The stirrup touching either shoe,
She rode astride as troopers do;
With kirtle kilted to her knee,
To which the mud splashed wretchedly; 10
And the wet dripped from every tree
Upon her head and heavy hair,
And on her eyelids broad and fair;
The tears and rain ran down her face.
By fits and starts they rode apace, 15
And very often was his place

Far off from her; he had to ride
Ahead, to see what might betide
When the roads crossed; and sometimes,
when

There rose a murmuring from his men, 20
Had to turn back with promises;
Ah me! she had but little ease;
And often for pure doubt and dread
She sobbed, made giddy in the head
By the swift riding; while, for cold, 25
Her slender fingers scarce could hold
The wet reins; yea, and scarcely, too,
She felt the foot within her shoe
Against the stirrup; all for this,
To part at last without a kiss 30
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they neared that old soaked hay,
They saw across the only way
That Judas, Godmar, and the three
Red running lions dismally 35
Grinned from his pennon, under which,
In one straight line along the ditch,
They counted thirty heads.

So then,
While Robert turned round to his men,
She saw at once the wretched end, 40
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend
Her coif ' the wrong way from her head,
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one,
At Poitiers where we made them run, 45
So fast — why, sweet my love, good cheer.
The Gascon frontier is so near,
Nought after this."

But, "O," she said,
"My God! my God! I have to tread
The long way back without you; then 50
The court at Paris; those six men;
The gratings of the Chatelet;
The swift Seine on some rainy day
Like this, and people standing by,
And laughing, while my weak hands try 55
To recollect how strong men swim.
All this, or else a life with him,
For which I should be damned at last,
Would God that this next hour were past!"

He answered not, but cried his cry, 60
"St. George for Marny!" cheerily;
And laid his hand upon her rein.
Alas! no man of all his train
Gave back that cheery cry again;
And, while for rage his thumb beat fast 65
Upon his sword-hilts, some one cast

About his neck a kerchief long,
And bound him.

Then they went along
To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,
Your lover's life is on the wane 70
So fast, that, if this very hour
You yield not as my paramour,
He will not see the rain leave off —
Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff, 75
Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,
Then gazed upon the palm, as though
She thought her forehead bled, and — "No."
She said, and turned her head away,
As there were nothing else to say, 80
And everything were settled: red
Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:
"Jehane, on yonder hill there stands
My castle, guarding well my lands: 85
What hinders me from taking you,
And doing that I list to do
To your fair wilful body, while
Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
A long way out she thrust her chin: 90
"You know that I should strangle you
While you were sleeping; or bite through
Your throat, by God's help — ah!" she said,
"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!
For in such wise they hem me in, 95
I cannot choose but sin and sin,
Whatever happens: yet I think
They could not make me eat or drink,
And so should I just reach my rest."
"Nay, if you do not my behest, 100
O Jehane! though I love you well,"
Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell
All that I know." "Foul lies," she said.
"Eh? lies my Jehane? by God's head,
At Paris folks would deem them true! 105
Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you,
'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!
Give us Jehane to burn or drown!' —
Eh — gag me Robert! — sweet my friend,
This were indeed a piteous end 110
For those long fingers, and long feet,
And long neck, and smooth shoulders sweet;
An end that few men would forget
That saw it — So, an hour yet:
Consider, Jehane, which to take 115
Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,
Dismounting, did she leave that place,
And totter some yards: with her face

Turned upward to the sky she lay,
Her head on a wet heap of hay, 120
And fell asleep: and while she slept,
And did not dream, the minutes crept
Round to the twelve again; but she,
Being waked at last, sighed quietly,
And strangely childlike came, and said: 125
"I will not." Straightway Godmar's head,
As though it hung on strong wires, turned
Most sharply round, and his face burned.

For Robert — both his eyes were dry,
He could not weep, but gloomily 130
He seemed to watch the rain; yea, too,
His lips were firm; he tried once more
To touch her lips; she reached out, sore
And vain desire so tortured them,
The poor grey lips, and now the hem 135
Of his sleeve brushed them.

With a start

Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;
From Robert's throat he loosed the bands
Of silk and mail; with empty hands
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw, 140
The long bright blade without a flaw
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand
In Robert's hair; she saw him bend
Back Robert's head; she saw him send
The thin steel down; the blow told well, 145
Right backward the knight Robert fell,
And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,
Unwitting, as I deem: so then
Godmar turned grinning to his men,
Who ran, some five or six, and beat 150
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turned again and said:
"So, Jehane, the first fitte¹ is read!
Take note, my lady, that your way
Lies backward to the Chatelet!" 155
She shook her head and gazed awhile
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
Beside the haystack in the floods. 160

Pub. 1858.

AN APOLOGY

PROLOGUE TO THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears, 5

i canto.

Or hope again for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.¹

But rather, when, aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth, 10
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days
die —

Remember me a little then, I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care 15
That weighs us down who live and earn our
bread,
These idle verses have no power to bear;
So let me sing of names rememberèd,
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
Or long time take their memory quite
away 20
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due
time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked
straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory
gate, 25
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did
show, 30
That through one window men beheld the
spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted
way,
Piped the drear wind of that December
day. 35

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must
be; 40
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall
slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

Pub. 1868.

¹ Note that the stanza is the rime royal.

L'ENVOI to THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Here are we for the last time face to face,
Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee speed
Upon thy perilous journey to that place
For which I have done on thee pilgrim's
weed,
Striving to get thee all things for thy need —
I love thee, whatso time or men may say 6
Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en if thou
Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears on;
For ever as thy fashioning did grow, 10
Kind word and praise because of thee I won
From those without whom were my world all
gone,
My hope fallen dead, my singing cast away,
And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee; yet this last time must it be 15
That thou must hold thy peace and I must
speak,
Lest if thou babble I begin to see
Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart too
weak,
To find the land thou goest forth to seek —
Though what harm if thou die upon the
way, 20
Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never
reach,
Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet, or
death;
Therefore a word unto thee would I teach
To answer these, who, noting thy weak
breath, 25
Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little faith,
May make thy fond desire a sport and play
Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the road
thereto?
Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou
know'st it not; 30
Surely no book of verse I ever knew
But ever was the heart within him hot
To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot —
There, now we both laugh — as the whole
world may,
At us poor singers of an empty day. 35

Nay, let it pass, and harken! Hast thou
heard
That therein I believe I have a friend,
Of whom for love I may not be afear'd?

It is to him indeed I bid thee wend;
Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere thou
end, 40
Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,
Thou idle singer of an empty day!

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the road,
And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,
Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load, 45
My Master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou do
meet,
Then shalt thou win a space of rest full
sweet;
Then be thou bold, and speak the words I say,
The idle singer of an empty day!

"O Master, O thou great of heart and
tongue, 50
Thou well mayst ask me why I wander here,
In raiment rent of stories oft besung!
But of thy gentleness draw thou anear,
And then the heart of one who held thee dear
Mayst thou behold! So near as that I lay 55
Unto the singer of an empty day.

"For this he ever said, who sent me forth
To seek a place amid thy company:
That howsoever little was my worth,
Yet was he worth e'en just so much as I; 60
He said that rhyme hath little skill to lie;
Nor feigned to cast his worsen part away;
In idle singing for an empty day.

"I have beheld him tremble oft enough
At things he could not choose but trust to
me, 65
Although he knew the world was wise and
rough;
And never did he fail to let me see
His love, — his folly and faithlessness,
maybe;
And still in turn I gave him voice to pray
Such prayers as cling about an empty day. 70

"Thou, keen-eyed, reading me, mayst read
him through,
For surely little is there left behind;
No power great deeds unnameable to do;
No knowledge for which words he may not
find, 74
No love of things as vague as autumn wind —
Earth of the earth lies hidden by my clay,
The idle singer of an empty day!

"Children we twain are, saith he, late made
wise
In love, but in all else most childish still,
And seeking still the pleasure of our eyes, 80

And what our ears with sweetest sounds may fill;
 Not fearing Love, lest these things he should kill;
 Howe'er his pain by pleasure doth he lay,
 Making a strange tale of an empty day.

"Death have we hated, knowing not what it meant;
 Life have we loved, through green leaf and through sere,
 Though still the less we knew of its intent;
 The Earth and Heaven through countless year on year,
 Slow changing, were to us but curtains fair,
 Hung around about a little room, where play
 Weeping and laughter of man's empty day.

"O Master, if thine heart could love us yet,
 Spite of things left undone, and wrongly done,
 Some place in loving hearts then should we get,
 For thou, sweet-souled, didst never stand alone,
 But knew'st the joy and woe of many an one—

By lovers dead, who live through thee, we pray,
 Help thou us singers of an empty day!"

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou mayst gain
 Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof thou die?
 Nay, it shall not be. — Thou mayst toil in vain,
 And never draw the House of Fame anigh;
 Yet he and his shall know whereof we cry,
 Shall call it not ill done to strive to lay
 The ghosts that crowd about life's empty day.

Then let the others go! and if indeed
 In some old garden thou and I have wrought,
 And made fresh flowers spring up from hoarded seed,
 And fragrance of old days and deeds have brought
 Back to folk weary; all was not for nought.
 — No little part it was for me to play —
 The idle singer of an empty day.

85
100
105
109
95
Pub. 1870.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837-1909)

By birth, Swinburne was an aristocrat. His father, an admiral in the British navy, was the son of a baronet, his mother the daughter of an earl. He was born in London, April 5, 1837; reared by his mother and his father's father, who together gave him rigid training in Italian and French; and formally educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, where he added a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek literature to his accomplishments. To a non-conformer like Swinburne, a voracious reader, a sensitive and very able student whose passion already was the study and practice of poetic expression, formal education, like any restraint, was an irritant. After four years at Oxford, during the last terms of which his attendance was desultory, he left without a degree. The very next year, 1860, he published a volume containing two poetic plays, *The Queen Mother*, and *Rosamund*. In 1864, he made an extended trip on the Continent, meeting and spending much time with Landor in Florence. Returning to London in 1865, he took up his residence with Meredith and Rossetti in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, London. Morris, Burne-Jones, and other Pre-Raphaelites became his close friends. In this year he published two volumes, each containing a poetic play, *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Chastelard*. The first established Swinburne as a poet; the second play (the first in a trilogy, later completed by *Boitard*, 1874, and *Mary Stuart*, 1881) was condemned by many as immoral. The following year, 1866, all England became aroused by the publication of his *Poems and Ballads*. Many readers were thrilled by his remarkable skill in versifying; more were shocked by what they considered his immorality. In 1878, he published a second, and in 1889, a third series of *Poems and Ballads*. Among his other works may be mentioned *Erechtheus*, 1876, and *Tristram of Lyonesse*, 1882. As a critic, Swinburne wrote studies of Blake, 1867, Chapman, 1875, Shakespeare, 1879, Victor Hugo, 1886, and Ben Jonson, 1889. Most of his criticism is impressionistic.

As a man, Swinburne was erratic. He lived a Bohemian life in London, associating mainly with the Pre-Raphaelites, the influence of whose romanticism and modern social ideas is evident in his writings. When Swinburne was in danger of wasting himself in unrestrained living, Theodore Watts-Dunton brought him to his own home in Putney. There he lived for thirty-odd years until his death in 1909. He never married.

As a poet, Swinburne is approached by few in his remarkable mastery of technique. None of his contemporaries could make words sing as he could. At times his facility in verse is almost fatal to any ideas that he may have had in mind. The charge, however, that his poems are

merely full of sound, signifying nothing, is greatly exaggerated. In Swinburne can be found the nineteenth-century struggle over religion, indignant cries at the existing social order, and above all, a deep feeling for nature, especially the sea.

Harpers perform the complete works of Swinburne. For his life, see the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

CHORUSES from ATALANTA IN CALYDON

I

When the hounds of spring are on winter's
traces,

The mother of months¹ in meadow or
plain

Fills the shadows and windy places

With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale² amorously

Is half assuaged for Itylus,³

For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,

The tongueless vigil and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of
quivers,

Maiden most perfect,⁴ lady of light,

With a noise of winds and many rivers,

With a clamor of waters, and with might;

Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,

Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;

For the faint east quickens, the wan west

shivers,

Round the feet of the day and the feet of

the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to
her,

Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?

O that man's heart were as fire and could

spring to her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams that

spring!

For the stars and the winds are unto her

As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;

For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,

And the southwest-wind and the west-

wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,

And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,

The light that loses, the night that wins;

And time remembered is grief forgotten,

And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,

And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a traveling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year
flushes

From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;

And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,

And the oat is heard above the lyre,

And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes

The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,

Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,

Follows with dancing and fills with delight

The Mænad¹ and the Bassarid;²

And soft as lips that laugh and hide,

The laughing leaves of the trees divide,

And screen from seeing and leave in sight

The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair

Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;

The wild vine slipping down leaves bare

Her bright breast shortening into sighs;

The wild vine slips with the weight of its

leaves,

But the berried ivy catches and cleaves

To the limbs that glitter, the feet that

scare

The wolf that follows, the fawn that flies.

2

Before the beginning of years

There came to the making of man

Time, with a gift of tears;

Grief, with a glass that ran;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven;

Summer, with flowers that fell;

Remembrance fallen from heaven,

And madness risen from hell;

Strength without hands to smite;

Love that endures for a breath:

Night, the shadow of light,

And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand

Fire, and the falling of tears,

And a measure of sliding sand

From under the feet of the years;

¹ Bacchantes, female devotees of Bacchus and Pan.

¹ Diana or Artemis, goddess of the moon as well as of the chase.

² Philomela, who was changed into a nightingale when King Tereus pursued her.

³ Son of Tereus and Procne. Procne killed him and fed him to his father when Tereus violated her sister, Philomela.

⁴ Diana.

And froth and drift of the sea;
 And dust of the laboring earth;
 And bodies of things to be 75
 In the houses of death and of birth;
 And wrought with weeping and laughter,
 And fashioned with loathing and love,
 With life before and after
 And death beneath and above, 80
 For a day and a night and a morrow,
 That his strength might endure for a
 span
 With travail and heavy sorrow,
 The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the
 south 85
 They gathered as unto strife;
 They breathed upon his mouth,
 They filled his body with life;
 Eyesight and speech they wrought
 For the veils of the soul therein, 90
 A time for labor and thought,
 A time to serve and to sin:
 They gave him light in his ways,
 And love, and a space for delight,
 And beauty and length of days, 95
 And night, and sleep in the night.
 His speech is a burning fire;
 With his lips he travaileth;
 In his heart is a blind desire,
 In his eyes foreknowledge of death; 100
 He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
 Sows, and he shall not reap;
 His life is a watch or a vision
 Between a sleep and a sleep.

Pub. 1865.

HYMN TO PROSERPINE ¹

AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF
 THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Vicisti, Galilæe ²

I have lived long enough, having seen one
 thing, that love hath an end;
 Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me
 now and befriend.
 Thou art more than the day or the morrow,
 the seasons that laugh or that weep;
 For these give joy and sorrow; but thou,
 Proserpina, sleep.
 Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet the
 feet of the dove; 5
 But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of the
 grapes or love.

Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and harp-
 string of gold,
 A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to
 behold?
 I am sick of singing: the bays burn deep and
 chafe: I am fain
 To rest a little from praise and grievous
 pleasure and pain. 10
 For the Gods we know not of, who give us our
 daily breath,
 We know they are cruel as love or life, and
 lovely as death.
 O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast forth,
 wiped out in a day!
 From your wrath is the world released,
 redeemed from your chains, men
 say.
 New Gods are crowned in the city; their
 flowers have broken your rods; 15
 They are merciful, clothed with pity, the
 young compassionate Gods.
 But for me their new device is barren, the
 days are bare;
 Things long past over suffice, and men for-
 gotten that were.
 Time and the Gods are at strife; ye dwell in
 the midst thereof,
 Draining a little life from the barren breasts
 of love. 20
 I say to you, cease, take rest; yea, I say to
 you all be at peace,
 Till the bitter milk of her breast and the
 barren bosom shall cease.
 Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? but these
 thou shalt not take,
 The laurel, the palms and the pæan, the
 breast of the nymphs in the brake;
 Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble
 with tenderer breath; 25
 And all the wings of the Loves, and all the
 joy before death;
 All the feet of the hours that sound as a
 single lyre,
 Dropped and deep in the flowers, with strings
 that flicker like fire,
 More than these wilt thou give, things fairer
 than all these things?
 Nay, for a little we live, and life hath mutable
 wings. 30
 A little while and we die; shall life not thrive
 as it may?
 For no man under the sky lives twice, out-
 living his day.
 And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath
 enough of his tears:
 Why should he labor, and bring fresh grief to
 blacken his years?
 Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the

¹ Proserpine or Persephone was queen of the lower
 regions.

² Thou hast conquered, O Galilean.

world has grown gray from thy
 breath; 35
 We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed
 on the fulness of death.
 Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet
 for a day;
 But love grows bitter with treason, and
 laurel outlives not May.
 Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the world
 is not sweet in the end;
 For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new
 years ruin and rend. 40
 Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul is a
 rock that abides;
 But her ears are vexed with the roar and her
 face with the foam of the tides.
 O lips that the live blood faints in, the leav-
 ings of rack and rods!
 O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of
 gibbeted Gods!
 Though all men abase them before you in
 spirits, and all knees bend, 45
 I kneel not neither adore you, but standing,
 look to the end.
 All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits and
 sorrows are cast
 Far out with the foam of the present that
 sweeps to the surf of the past:
 Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and
 between the remote sea-gates,
 Waste water washes, and tall ships founder,
 and deep death waits: 50
 Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad
 about with the seas as with wings,
 And impelled of invisible tides, fulfilled of
 unspeakable things,
 White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-
 toothed and serpentine-curved,
 Rolls, under the whitening wind of the
 future, the wave of the world.
 The depths stand naked in sunder behind it,
 the storms flee away; 55
 In the hollow before it the thunder is taken
 and snared as a prey;
 In its sides is the north-wind bound; and its
 salt is of all men's tears;
 With light of ruin, and sound of changes, and
 pulse of years:
 With travail of day after day, and with
 trouble of hour upon hour;
 And bitter as blood is the spray; and the
 crests are as fangs that devour: 60
 And its vapor and storm of its steam as the
 sighing of spirits to be;
 And its noise as the noise in a dream; and its
 depth as the roots of the sea:
 And the height of its head as the height of the
 utmost stars of the air:

And the ends of the earth at the might thereof
 tremble, and time is made bare.
 Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will ye
 chasten the high sea with rods? 65
 Will ye take her to chain her with chains,
 who is older than all ye Gods?
 All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall ye
 pass and be past;
 Ye are Gods, and behold, ye shall die, and the
 waves be upon you at last.
 In the darkness of time, in the deeps of the
 years, in the changes of things,
 Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and the
 world shall forget you for kings. 70
 Though the feet of thine high priests tread
 where thy lords and our forefathers
 trod,
 Though these that were Gods are dead, and
 thou being dead art a God,
 Though before thee the throned Cytherean
 be fallen, and hidden her head,
 Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy
 dead shall go down to the dead.
 Of the maiden thy mother men sing as a
 goddess with grace clad around; 75
 Thou art throned where another was king;
 where another was queen she is
 crowned.
 Yea, once we had sight of another: but now
 she is queen, say these.
 Not as thine, not as thine was our mother, a
 blossom of flowering seas,
 Clothed round with the world's desire as
 with raiment, and fair as the foam,
 And fleetier than kindled fire, and a goddess,
 and mother of Rome. 80
 For thine came pale and a maiden, and sister
 to sorrow; but ours,
 Her deep hair heavily laden with odor, and
 color of flowers,
 White rose of the rose-white water, a silver
 splendor, a flame,
 Bent down into us that besought her, and
 earth grew sweet with her name.
 For thine came weeping, a slave among
 slaves, and rejected; but she 85
 Came flushed from the full-flushed wave, and
 imperial, her foot on the sea.
 And the wonderful waters knew her, the
 winds and the viewless ways,
 And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea-
 blue stream of the bays.
 Ye are fallen, our lords, by what token? we
 wist that ye should not fall.
 Ye were all so fair that are broken; and one
 more fair than ye all. 90
 But I turn to her still, having seen she shall
 surely abide in the end;

Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me
 now and befriend.
 O daughter of earth, of my mother, her
 crown and blossom of birth,
 I am also, I also thy brother; I go as I came
 unto earth.
 In the night where thine eyes are as moons
 are in heaven, the night where thou
 art, 95
 Where the silence is more than all tunes,
 where sleep overflows from the heart,
 Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in
 our world, and the red rose is white,
 And the wind falls faint as it blows with the
 fume of the flowers of the night,
 And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the
 shadow of Gods from afar
 Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the deep
 dim soul of a star, 100
 In the sweet low light of thy face, under
 heavens untrod by the sun,
 Let my soul with their souls find place, and
 forget what is done and undone.
 Thou art more than the Gods who number
 the days of our temporal breath;
 For these give labor and slumber; but thou,
 Proserpina, death.
 Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a season
 in silence. I know 105
 I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep as
 they sleep; even so.
 For the glass of the years is brittle wherein
 we gaze for a span;
 A little soul for a little bears up this corpse
 which is man.¹
 So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not
 again, neither weep.
 For there is no God found stronger than
 death; and death is a sleep. 110

A MATCH

This poem is a kind of *rondeau* or *rondel*, the
 chief characteristic of which is the repetition, at
 the end of each stanza, of the first two lines.

If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf,
 Our lives would grow together
 In sad or singing weather,
 Blown fields or flowerful closes, 5
 Green pleasure or gray grief;
 If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
 And love were like the tune, 10

1 ψυχάριον εἰ βαστάζον νεκρόν. ΕΠΙΚΤΕΤΟΣ.

With double sound and single
 Delight our lips would mingle,
 With kisses glad as birds are
 That get sweet rain at noon;
 If I were what the words are. 15
 And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
 And I your love were death,
 We'd shine and snow together
 Ere March made sweet the weather 20
 With daffodil and starling
 And hours of fruitful breath;
 If you were life, my darling,
 And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow, 25
 And I were page to joy,
 We'd play for lives and seasons
 With loving looks and treasons
 And tears of night and morrow
 And laughs of maid and boy; 30
 If you were thrall to sorrow,
 And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
 And I were lord in May,
 We'd throw with leaves for hours 35
 And draw for days with flowers,
 Till day like night were shady
 And night were bright like day;
 If you were April's lady,
 And I were lord in May. 40

If you were queen of pleasure,
 And I were king of pain,
 We'd hunt down love together,
 Pluck out his flying-feather,
 And teach his feet a measure, 45
 And find his mouth a rein;
 If you were queen of pleasure,
 And I were king of pain.

A BALLAD OF BURDENS

This poem is a *ballade*, a French verse-form,
 which usually consists of three or more eight-
 line stanzas rhyming *ababbcb* and a refrain or
envoy of four lines, *bcbc*. The last line of each
 stanza is always the same, and often the same
 rhymes for *a*, *b*, and *c* are kept throughout the
ballade. Swinburne allows himself variations.

The burden of fair women. Vain delight,
 And love self-slain in some sweet shameful
 way,
 And sorrowful old age that comes by night
 As a thief comes that has no heart by day,

And change that finds fair cheeks and
 leaves them gray, 5
 And weariness that keeps awake for hire,
 And grief that says what pleasure used to
 say:
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is sore,
 A burden without fruit in childbearing; 10
 Between the nightfall and the dawn three-
 score,
 Threescore between the dawn and evening.
 The shuddering in thy lips, the shuddering
 In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,
 Makes love seem shameful and a wretched
 thing 15
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay, kneel
 down,
 Cover thy head, and weep; for verily
 These market-men that buy thy white and
 brown
 In the last days shall take no thought for
 thee; 20
 In the last days like earth thy face shall
 be,
 Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with brine
 and mire,
 Sad with sick leavings of the sterile sea:
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt
 fear 25
 Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy
 bed;
 And say at night, "Would God the day were
 here!"
 And say at dawn, "Would God the day
 were dead!"
 With weary days thou shalt be clothed and
 fed,
 And wear remorse of heart for thine attire, 30
 Pain for thy girdle, and sorrow upon thine
 head:
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt
 see
 Gold tarnished, and the gray above the
 green;
 And as the thing thou seest thy face shall
 be, 35
 And no more as the thing beforetime seen.
 And thou shalt say of mercy, "It hath
 been;"
 And living, watch the old lips and loves
 expire,

And talking, tears shall take thy breath
 between:
 This is the end of every man's desire. 40
 The burden of sad sayings. In that day
 Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours, and
 tell
 Thy times and ways and words of love, and
 say
 How one was dear, and one desirable,
 And sweet was life to hear and sweet to
 smell; 45
 But now with lights reverse the old hours
 retire,
 And the last hour is shod with fire from
 hell:
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in spring,
 White rain and wind among the tender
 trees; 50
 A summer of green sorrows gathering;
 Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,
 With sad face set towards the year, that
 sees
 The charred ash drop out of the dropping
 pyre,
 And winter wan with many maladies; 55
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight
 And out of love, beyond the reach of
 hands,
 Changed in the changing of the dark and
 light,
 They walk and weep about the barren
 lands 60
 Where no seed is, nor any garner stands,
 Where in short breaths the doubtful days
 respire,
 And time's turned glass lets through the
 sighing sands:
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and
 lust 65
 Forsake thee, and the face of thy de-
 light;
 And underfoot the heavy hour strews dust,
 And overhead strange weathers burn and
 bite;
 And where the red was, lo the bloodless
 white;
 And where truth was, the likeness of a
 liar; 70
 And where day was, the likeness of the
 night:
 This is the end of every man's desire.

L'ENVOY

Princes,¹ and ye whom pleasure quickeneth,
 Heed well this rhyme before your pleasure
 tire;
 For life is sweet, but after life is death. 75
 This is the end of every man's desire.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet,
 Here, where all trouble seems
 Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
 In doubtful dreams of dreams,
 I watch the green field growing 5
 For reaping folk and sowing,
 For harvest time and mowing,
 A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
 And men that laugh and weep, 10
 Of what may come hereafter
 For men that sow to reap:
 I am weary of days and hours,
 Blown buds of barren flowers,
 Desires and dreams and powers, 15
 And every thing but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
 And far from eye or ear
 Wan waves and wet winds labor,
 Weak ships and spirits steer; 20
 They drive adrift, and whither
 They wot not who make thither;
 But no such winds blow hither,
 And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice, 25
 No heather-flower or vine,
 But bloomless buds of poppies,
 Green grapes of Proserpine,
 Pale beds of blowing rushes
 Where no leaf blooms or blushes 30
 Save this whereout she crushes
 For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
 In fruitless fields of corn,
 They bow themselves and slumber 35
 All night till light is born;
 And like a soul belated,
 In hell and heaven unmated,
 By cloud and mist abated
 Comes out of darkness morn. 40

Though one were strong as seven,
 He too with death shall dwell,

Nor wake with wings in heaven,
 Nor weep for pains in hell;
 Though one were fair as roses, 45
 His beauty clouds and closes;
 And well though love reposes,
 In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
 Crowned with calm leaves, she
 stands 50
 Who gathers all things mortal
 With cold immortal hands;
 Her languid lips are sweeter
 Than Love's, who fears to greet her,
 To men that mix and meet her 55
 For many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
 She waits for all men born;
 Forgets the earth her mother,¹
 The life of fruits and corn; 60
 And spring and seed and swallow
 Take wing for her, and follow
 Where summer song rings hollow,
 And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither, 65
 The old loves with wearier wings,
 And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things;
 Dead dreams of days forsaken,
 Blind buds that snows have shaken, 70
 Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure;
 To-day will die to-morrow; 75
 Time stoops to no man's lure;
 And love, grown faint and fretful,
 With lips but half regretful
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure. 80

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
 We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
 That no life lives forever; 85
 That dead men rise up never;
 That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light; 90
 Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight;

¹ Originally, in the *ballade*, the envoy was a kind of dedication, usually addressed to a prince.

¹ Proserpine's mother was Demeter, goddess of fruitfulness.

Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal:
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

95

Pub. 1866.

HERTHA *

I am that which began;
Out of me the years roll;
Out of me God and man;
I am equal and whole;
God changes, and man, and the form of them
bodily; I am the soul.

5

Before ever land was,
Before ever the sea,
Or soft hair of the grass,
Or fair limbs of the tree,
Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches, I
was, and thy soul was in me.

10

First life on my sources
First drifted and swam;
Out of me are the forces
That save it or damn;
Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast
and bird; before God was, I am.

15

Beside or above me
Nought is there to go;
Love or unlove me,
Unknow me or know,
I am that which unloves me and loves; I am
stricken, and I am the blow.

20

I the mark that is missed
And the arrows that miss,
I the mouth that is kissed
And the breath in the kiss,
The search, and the sought, and the seeker,
the soul and the body that is.

25

I am that thing which blesses
My spirit elate;
That which caresses
With hands uncreate
My limbs unbegotten that measure the
length of the measure of fate.

30

But what thing dost thou now,
Looking Godward, to cry
"I am I, thou art thou,
I am low, thou art high"?
I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him;
find thou but thyself, thou art I.

35

I the grain and the furrow,
The plough-cloven clod
And the ploughshare drawn thorough,
The germ and the sod,
The deed and the doer, the seed and the
sower, the dust which is God.

40

Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,
Child, underground?
Fire that impassioned thee,
Iron that bound,
Dim changes of water, what thing of all
these hast thou known of or found?

45

Canst thou say in thine heart
Thou hast seen with thine eyes
With what cunning of art
Thou wast wrought in what wise,
By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen,
and shown on my breast to the skies?

Who hath given, who hath sold it thee,
Knowledge of me?
Has the wilderness told it thee?
Hast thou learnt of the sea?
Hast thou communed in spirit with night?
have the winds taken counsel with
thee?

55

Have I set such a star
To show light on thy brow
That thou sawest from afar
What I show to thee now?
Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sun
and the mountains and thou?

60

What is here, dost thou know it?
What was, hast thou known?
Prophet nor poet
Nor tripod nor throne
Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but
only thy mother alone.

65

Mother, not maker,
Born, and not made;
Though her children forsake her,
Allured or afraid,
Praying prayers to the God of their fashion,
she stirs not for all that have prayed.

A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of night;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy
spirit, and live out thy life as the
light.

71

75

* The Teutonic earth-goddess.

I am in thee to save thee,
 As my soul in thee saith;
 Give thou, as I gave thee,
 Thy life-blood and breath,
 Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers of
 thy thought, and red fruit of thy
 death. 80

Be the ways of thy giving
 As mine were to thee;
 The free life of thy living,
 Be the gift of it free;
 Not as servant to lord, nor as master to
 slave, shalt thou give thee to me. 85

O children of banishment,
 Souls overcast,
 Were the lights ye see vanish meant
 Always to last,
 Ye would know not the sun overshadowing the
 shadows and stars overpast. 90

I that saw where ye trod
 The dim paths of the night
 Set the shadow called God
 In your skies to give light;
 But the morning of manhood is risen, and
 the shadowless soul is in sight. 95

The tree many-rooted
 That swells to the sky
 With frondage red-fruited,
 The life-tree am I;
 In the buds of your lives is the sap of my
 leaves: ye shall live and not die. 100

But the gods of your fashion
 That take and that give,
 In their pity and passion
 That scourge and forgive,
 They are worms that are bred in the bark
 that falls off; they shall die and not
 live. 105

My own blood is what stanches
 The wounds in my bark;
 Stars caught in my branches
 Make day of the dark,
 And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise
 shall tread out their fires as a spark.

Where dead ages hide under 111
 The live roots of the tree,
 In my darkness the thunder
 Makes utterance of me;
 In the clash of my boughs with each other
 ye hear the waves sound of the sea. 115

That noise is of Time,
 As his feathers are spread
 And his feet set to climb
 Through the boughs overhead,
 And my foliage rings round him and rus-
 tles, and branches are bent with his
 tread.

The storm-winds of ages 121
 Blow through me and cease,
 The war-wind that rages,
 The spring-wind of peace,
 Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses,
 ere one of my blossoms increase. 125

All sounds of all changes,
 All shadows and lights
 On the world's mountain-ranges
 And stream-riven heights,
 Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and
 language of storm-clouds on earth-
 shaking nights; 130

All forms of all faces,
 All works of all hands
 In unsearchable places
 Of time-stricken lands,
 All death and all life, and all reigns and all
 ruins, drop through me as sands. 135

Though sore be my burden
 And more than ye know,
 And my growth have no guerdon
 But only to grow,
 Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings above
 me or deathworms below. 140

These too have their part in me,
 As I too in these;
 Such fire is at heart in me,
 Such sap is this tree's,
 Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets of
 infinite lands and of seas. 145

In the spring-colored hours
 When my mind was as May's
 There brake forth of me flowers
 By centuries of days,
 Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood
 shot out from my spirit as rays. 150

And the sound of them springing
 And smell of their shoots
 Were as warmth and sweet singing
 And strength to my roots;
 And the lives of my children made perfect
 with freedom of soul were my fruits.

I bid you but be; 156
 I have need not of prayer;
 I have need of you free
 As your mouths of mine air;
 That my heart may be greater within me,
 beholding the fruits of me fair. 160

More fair than strange fruit is
 Of faiths ye espouse;
 In me only the root is
 That blooms in your boughs;
 Behold now your God that ye made you, to
 feed him with faith of your vows. 165

In the darkening and whitening
 Abysses adored,
 With dayspring and lightning
 For lamp and for sword,
 God thunders in heaven, and his angels are
 red with the wrath of the Lord. 170

O my sons, O too dutiful
 Toward gods not of me,
 Was not I enough beautiful?
 Was it hard to be free?
 or behold, I am with you, am in you and
 of you; look forth now and see. 175

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
 With miracles shod,
 With the fires of his thunders
 For raiment and rod,
 God trembles in heaven, and his angels are
 white with the terror of God. 180

For his twilight is come on him,
 His anguish is here;
 And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
 Grown gray from his fear;
 And his hour taketh hold on him stricken,
 the last of his infinite year. 185

Thought made him and breaks him,
 Truth slays and forgives;
 But to you, as time takes him,
 This new thing it gives,
 Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds
 upon freedom and lives. 190

For truth only is living,
 Truth only is whole,
 And the love of his giving
 Man's polestar and pole;
 Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my
 body, and seed of my soul. 195

One birth of my bosom;
 One beam of mine eye;

One topmost blossom
 That scales the sky;
 Man, equal and one with me, man that is
 made of me, man that is I. 200
 Pub. 1871.

TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA

Send but a song oversea for us,
 Heart of their hearts who are free,
 Heart of their singer, to be for us
 More than our singing can be;
 Ours, in the tempest at error, 5
 With no light but the twilight of terror;
 Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine-leaves and grasses,
 And blown as a tree through and through
 With the winds of the keen mountain-
 passes, 10
 And tender as sun-smitten dew;
 Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes
 The wastes of your limitless lakes,
 Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic 15
 Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,
 With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,
 With thoughts as thunders in throng,
 With consonant ardors of chords
 That pierce men's souls as with swords 20
 And hale them hearing along,

Make us too music, to be with us
 As a word from a world's heart warm,
 To sail the dark as a sea with us,
 Full-sailed, outsinging the storm, 25
 A song to put fire in our ears
 Whose burning shall burn up tears,
 Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,
 A word in the wind of cheer, 30
 To consume as with lightning the carrion
 That makes time foul for us here;
 In the air that our dead things infest
 A blast of the breath of the west,
 Till east way as west way is clear. 35

Out of the sun beyond sunset,
 From the evening whence morning shall be,
 With the rollers in measureless onset,
 With the van of the storming sea,
 With the world-wide wind, with the breath 40
 That breaks ships driven upon death,
 With the passion of all things free,

- With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,
 White myriads for death to bestride
 In the charge of the ruining Atlantic 45
 Where deaths by regiments ride,
 With clouds and clamors of waters,
 With a long note shriller than slaughter's
 On the furrowless fields world-wide,
- With terror, with ardor and wonder, 50
 With the soul of the season that wakes
 When the weight of a whole year's thunder
 In the tidestream of autumn breaks,
 Let the flight of the wide-winged word
 Come over, come in and be heard, 55
 Take form and fire for our sakes.
- For a continent bloodless with travail
 Here toils and brawls as it can,
 And the web of it who shall unravel
 Of all that peer on the plan; 60
 Would fain grow men, but they grow not,
 And fain be free, but they know not
 One name for freedom and man?
- One name, not twain for division;
 One thing, not twain, from the birth; 65
 Spirit and substance and vision,
 Worth more than worship is worth;
 Unbeheld, unadored, undivined,
 The cause, the center, the mind,
 The secret and sense of the earth. 70
- Here as a weakling in irons,
 Here as a weanling in bands,
 As a prey that the stake-net environs,
 Our life that we looked for stands;
 And the man-child naked and dear, 75
 Democracy, turns on us here
 Eyes trembling with tremulous hands.
- It sees not what season shall bring to it
 Sweet fruit of its bitter desire;
 Few voices it hears yet sing to it, 80
 Few pulses of hearts reaspire;
 Foresees not time, nor forehears
 The noises of imminent years,
 Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:
- When crowned and weaponed and curbless
 It shall walk without helm or shield 86
 The bare burnt furrows and herbless
 Of war's last flame-stricken field,
 Till godlike, equal with time,
 It stand in the sun sublime, 90
 In the godhead of man revealed.
- Round your people and over them
 Light like raiment is drawn,
- Close as a garment to cover them
 Wrought not of mail nor of lawn; 95
 Here, with hope hardly to wear,
 Naked nations and bare
 Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.
- Chains are here, and a prison,
 Kings, and subjects, and shame. 100
 If the God upon you be arisen,
 How should our songs be the same?
 How, in confusion of change,
 How shall we sing, in a strange
 Land, songs praising his name? 105
- God is buried and dead to us,
 Even the spirit of earth,
 Freedom; so have they said to us,
 Some with mocking and mirth,
 Some with heartbreak and tears; 110
 And a God without eyes, without ears,
 Who shall sing of him, dead in the birth?
- The earth-god Freedom, the lonely
 Face lightening, the footprint unshod,
 Not as one man crucified only 115
 Nor scourged with but one life's rod;
 The soul that is substance of nations,
 Reincarnate with fresh generations;
 The great god Man, which is God.
- But in weariest of years and obscurest 120
 Doth it live not at heart of all things,
 The one God and one spirit, a purest
 Life, fed from unstanchable springs?
 Within love, within hatred it is,
 And its seed in the stripe as the kiss, 125
 And in slaves is the germ, and in kings.
- Freedom we call it, for holier
 Name of the soul's there is none;
 Surelier its labors, if slower,
 Than the meters of star or of sun; 130
 Slowlier than life into breath,
 Surelier than time into death,
 It moves till its labor be done.
- Till the motion be done and the measure
 Circling through season and clime, 135
 Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,
 Vision of virtue and crime;
 Till consummate with conquering eyes,
 A soul disembodied, it rise
 From the body transfigured of time. 140
- Till it rise and remain and take station
 With the stars of the worlds that rejoice;
 Till the voice of its heart's exultation
 Be as theirs an invariable voice;

By no discord of evil estranged, 145
 By no pause, by no breach in it changed,
 By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,
 With the spirit, the star, and the sod;
 With the kingless and king-stricken na-
 tions, 150
 With the cross, and the chain, and the
 rod;
 The most high, the most secret, most lonely,
 The earth-soul Freedom, that only
 Lives, and that only is God.

A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON ¹

PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS

Bird of the bitter bright gray golden morn,
 Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous
 years,
 First of us all and sweetest singer born,
 Whose far shrill note the world of new men
 hears
 Cleave the cold shuddering shade as
 twilight clears; 5
 When song new-born put off the old world's
 attire
 And felt its tune on her changed lips ex-
 pire,
 Writ foremost on the roll of them that
 came
 Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name! 10

Alas, the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,
 That clothed thy life with hopes and sins
 and fears,
 And gave thee stones for bread and tares for
 corn
 And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy
 starveling peers,
 Till death clipt close their flight with
 shameful shears; 15
 Till shifts came short and loves were hard to
 hire,
 When lilt of song nor twitch of twangling
 wire
 Could buy thee bread or kisses; when light
 fame
 Spurned like a ball and haled through brake
 and briar,
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name! 20

¹ The madcap poet of France.

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled and
 torn!
 Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with light
 quick tears!
 Poor perfect voice, most blithe when most
 forlorn,
 That rings athwart the sea whence no man
 steers,
 Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells in
 our ears! 25
 What far delight has cooled the fierce desire
 That, like some ravenous bird, was strong
 to tire
 On that frail flesh and soul consumed with
 flame,
 But left more sweet than roses to respire,
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name? 30

ENVOI

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears and
 fire,
 A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;
 Shame soiled thy song, and song assoiled
 thy shame.
 But from thy feet now death has washed the
 mire,
 Love reads out first at head of all our
 quire, 35
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
 name.
 September, 1877.

ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT ¹

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
 Pass, followed one with love and each with
 wonder:
 The stormy sophist with his mouth of
 thunder,
 Clothed with loud words and mantled in the
 night
 Of darkness and magnificence of night; 5
 And one whose eye could smite the night
 in sunder,
 Searching if light or no light were there-
 under,
 And found in love of loving-kindness light.
 Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire
 Still following Righteousness with deep
 desire 10
 Shone sole and stern before her and above

¹ George Eliot died December 22, 1880; Carlyle,
 February 5, 1881.

Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more sweet
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly
feet, —

The light of little children, and their love.

Pub. 1882.

HOPE AND FEAR

Beneath the shadow of dawn's ærial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own
sphere,

Hope from the front of youth in godlike
cheer

Looks Godward, past the shades where blind
men grope

Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams
can ope,

And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play; nor dreams
that Fear

At noon may rise and pierce the heart of
Hope.

Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and
yearn,

May Truth first purge her eyesight to dis-
cern

What once being known leaves time no
power to appal;

Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not, learn
The kind wise word that falls from years
that fall —

"Hope thou not much, and fear thou not
at all."

Pub. 1882.

A CHILD'S FUTURE

What will it please you, my darling, here-
after to be?

Fame upon land will you look for, or glory
by sea?

Gallant your life will be always, and all of it
free.

Free as the wind when the heart of the twi-
light is stirred

Eastward, and sounds from the springs of the
sunrise are heard:

Free — and we know not another as infinite
word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may com-
pass us round,

Hate may arise up against us, or hope may
confound;

Love may forsake us; yet may not the spirit
be bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of
joy

Still may the soul be, and each to her
strength as a toy:

Free in the glance of the man as the smile of
the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit that
gives

Life, and without her is nothing that verily
lives:

Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon
death and forgives.

Brightest and hardiest of roses anear and
afar

Glitters the blithe little face of you, round as
a star:

Liberty bless you and keep you to be as you
are.

England and liberty bless you and keep you
to be

Worthy the name of their child and the sight
of their sea;

Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears not, is
free.

Pub. 1882.

WALTER PATER (1839-1894)

Walter Horatio Pater was born in London, August 4, 1839. He took his B.A. at Queen's College, Oxford, and, elected fellow of Brasenose in 1864, he spent the rest of his life in scholarly seclusion, writing about art and literature of which he was a brilliant critic. His *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* appeared in 1873, *Marius the Epicurean*, 1885, *Appreciations*, a volume of critical essays, in 1889. He died in 1894.

Pater applied the philosophy of Epicurus to modern life in the recognition that all we know is limited to the impressions which we receive of the world without, and that it is the part of wisdom to multiply these and cherish the most exquisite of them. This pagan attitude is in sharp contrast to Stevenson's strenuous defense of duty to others. Pater, however, experienced a revulsion to the Christian doctrine of sacrifice, which marks the dénouement of his chief work, *Marius the Epicurean*.

The standard biography of Pater is that by Thomas Wright. Shorter lives are those by Ferris Greenslet and A. C. Benson (English Men of Letters series). An excellent volume of selections is that by E. E. Hale, Jr., (Henry Holt & Co.)

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE RENAISSANCE

CONCLUSION

1873

This chapter was omitted from the second edition in 1877, but restored in 1888 with the note: "This brief Conclusion was omitted in the second edition of this book, as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning." One of the changes, perhaps significant of some change in Pater's own attitude, is the introduction of the parenthetical clause, "at least among 'the children of this world,'" in the final paragraph.

Λέγει που 'Ηράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα Χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει.^x

To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought. Let us begin with that which is without — our physical life. Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, — the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat. What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names? But these elements, phosphorus and lime and delicate fibres, are present not in the human body alone: we detect them in places most remote from it. Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them — the passage of the blood, the wasting and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain by every ray of light and sound — processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces. Like the elements of which we are composed, the action of these forces extends beyond us; it rusts iron and ripens corn. Far out on every side of us those elements are broadcast, driven by many forces; and birth and gesture and death and the springing of violets from the grave are but a few out of ten thousand resultant combinations. That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them — a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it. This at least of flame-

like our life has, that it is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways.

Or if we begin with the inward whirl of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring. There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye and fading of color from the wall, — the movement of the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest, — but the race of the mid-stream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought. At first sight experience seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, pressing upon us with a sharp and importunate reality, calling us out of ourselves in a thousand forms of action. But when reflection begins to act upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence; the cohesive force seems suspended like a trick of magic; each object is loosed into a group of impressions — color, odor, texture — in the mind of the observer. And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impressions unstable, flickering, inconsistent, which burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them, it contracts still further; the whole scope of observation is dwarfed to the narrow chamber of the individual mind. Experience, already reduced to a swarm of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world.

Analysis goes a step farther still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it, of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is. To such a tremulous wisp constantly reforming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it —

^x "Heraclitus says that all things give way and nothing remains." (From Plato's *Cratylus*.)

a relic more or less fleeting — of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down. It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off — that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

Philosophiren, says Novalis, *ist dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren*.¹ The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit is to rouse, to startle it into sharp and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us, — but for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits: for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike. While all melts under our feet, we may well catch at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colors, and curious odors, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. With this sense of the splendor of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch. What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions,

never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own. Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us. "Philosophy is the microscope of thought." The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves, or what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us.

One of the most beautiful passages in the writings of Rousseau is that in the sixth book of the *Confessions*, where he describes the awakening in him of the literary sense. "An undefinable taint of death had always clung about him, and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by mortal disease. He asked himself how he might make as much as possible of the interval that remained; and he was not biased by anything in his previous life when he decided that it must be by intellectual excitement, which he found just then in the clear, fresh writings of Voltaire. Well! we are all *condamnés*, as Victor Hugo says: we are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve — *les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis*; we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest — at least among "the children of this world" — in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us. Only be sure it is passion — that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake, has most; for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

SANDRO BOTTICELLI

1870

This essay on the famous Italian painter of the fifteenth century appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, for August, 1870. It was re-

¹ "To be a philosopher is to cease to be sluggish, to become alive." Novalis was the pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg (died 1801).

printed in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1873.

In Leonardo's treatise on painting only one contemporary is mentioned by name — Sandro Botticelli. This preëminence may be due to chance only, but to some will rather appear a result of deliberate judgment; for people have begun to find out the charm of Botticelli's work, and his name, little known in the last century, is quietly becoming important. In the middle of the fifteenth century he had already anticipated much of that meditative subtlety, which is sometimes supposed peculiar to the great imaginative workmen of its close. Leaving the simple religion which had occupied the followers of Giotto for a century, and the simple naturalism which had grown out of it, a thing of birds and flowers only, he sought inspiration in what to him were works of the modern world, the writings of Dante and Boccaccio, and in new readings of his own of classical stories: or, if he painted religious incidents, painted them with an under-current of original sentiment, which touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject. What is the peculiar sensation, what is the peculiar quality of pleasure, which his work has the property of exciting in us, and which we cannot get elsewhere? For this, especially when he has to speak of a comparatively unknown artist, is always the chief question which a critic has to answer.

In an age when the lives of artists were full of adventure, his life is almost colorless. Criticism, indeed, has cleared away much of the gossip which Vasari accumulated, has touched the legend of Lippo and Lucrezia, and rehabilitated the character of Andrea del Castagno. But in Botticelli's case there is no legend to dissipate. He did not even go by his true name: Sandro is a nickname, and his true name is Filipepi, Botticelli being only the name of the goldsmith who first taught him art. Only two things happened to him, two things which he shared with other artists: — he was invited to Rome to paint in the Sistine Chapel, and he fell in later life under the influence of Savonarola, passing apparently almost out of men's sight in a sort of religious melancholy, which lasted till his death in 1515, according to the received date. Vasari says that he plunged into the study of Dante, and even wrote a comment on the *Divine Comedy*. But it seems strange that he should have lived on

inactive so long; and one almost wishes that some document might come to light, which, fixing the date of his death earlier, might relieve one, in thinking of him, of his dejected old age.

He is before all things a poetical painter, blending the charm of story and sentiment, the medium of the art of poetry, with the charm of line and color, the medium of abstract painting. So he becomes the illustrator of Dante. In a few rare examples of the edition of 1481, the blank spaces, left at the beginning of every canto for the hand of the illuminator, have been filled, as far as the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*, with impressions of engraved plates, seemingly by way of experiment, for in the copy in the Bodleian Library, one of the three impressions it contains has been printed upside down, and much awry, in the midst of the luxurious printed page. Giotto, and the followers of Giotto, with their almost childish religious aim, had not learned to put that weight of meaning into outward things, light, color, everyday gesture, which the poetry of the *Divine Comedy* involves, and before the fifteenth century Dante could hardly have found an illustrator. Botticelli's illustrations are crowded with incident, blending, with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety, three phases of the same scene into one plate. The grotesques, so often a stumbling-block to painters, who forget that the words of a poet, which only feebly present an image to the mind, must be lowered in key when translated into visible form, make one regret that he has not rather chosen for illustration the more subdued imagery of the *Purgatorio*. Yet in the scene of those who "go down quick into hell," there is an inventive force about the fire taking hold on the upturned soles of the feet, which proves that the design is no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision; while the scene of the Centaurs wins one at once, for, forgetful of the actual circumstances of their appearance, Botticelli has gone off with delight on the thought of the Centaurs themselves, bright, small creatures of the woodland, with arch baby faces and mignon forms, drawing tiny bows.

Botticelli lived in a generation of naturalists, and he might have been a mere naturalist among them. There are traces enough in his work of that alert sense of outward things, which, in the pictures of that period, fills the lawns with delicate living creatures, and the

hillsides with pools of water, and the pools of water with flowering reeds. But this was not enough for him; he is a visionary painter, and in his visionariness he resembles Dante. Giotto, the tried companion of Dante, Masaccio, Ghirlandajo even, do but transcribe, with more or less refining, the outward image; they are dramatic, not visionary painters; they are almost impassive spectators of the action before them. But the genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own; in this interest it plays fast and loose with those data, rejecting some and isolating others, and always combining them anew. To him, as to Dante, the scene, the color, the outward image or gesture, comes with all its incisive and importunate reality; but awakes in him, moreover, by some subtle law of his own structure, a mood which it awakes in no one else, of which it is the double or repetition, and which it clothes, that all may share it, with visible circumstance.

But he is far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante which, referring all human action to the simple formula of purgatory, heaven and hell, leaves an insoluble element of prose in the depths of Dante's poetry. One picture of his, with the portrait of the donor, Matteo Palmieri, below, had the credit or discredit of attracting some shadow of ecclesiastical censure. This Matteo Palmieri (two dim figures move under that name in contemporary history) was the reputed author of a poem, still unedited, "*La Città Divina*," which represented the human race as an incarnation of those angels who, in the revolt of Lucifer, were neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies, a fantasy of that earlier Alexandrian philosophy about which the Florentine intellect in that century was so curious. Botticelli's picture may have been only one of those familiar compositions in which religious reverie has recorded its impressions of the various forms of beatified existence — *Glorias*, as they were called, like that in which Giotto painted the portrait of Dante; but somehow it was suspected of embodying in a picture the wayward dream of Palmieri, and the chapel where it hung was closed. Artists so entire as Botticelli are usually careless about philosophical theories, even when the philosopher is a Florentine of the fifteenth century, and his work a poem in *terza rima*. But Botticelli, who wrote a commentary on Dante, and became the dis-

ciple of Savonarola, may well have let such theories come and go across him. True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment with which he infuses his profane and sacred persons, comely, and in a certain sense like angels, but with a sense of displacement or loss about them — the wistfulness of exiles, conscious of a passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains, which runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy.

So just what Dante scorns as unworthy alike of heaven and hell, Botticelli accepts, that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals. He thus sets for himself the limits within which art, undisturbed by any moral ambition, does its most sincere and surest work. His interest is neither in the untempered goodness of Angelico's saints, nor the untempered evil of Orcagna's *Inferno*; but with men and women, in their mixed and uncertain condition, always attractive, clothed sometimes by passion with a character of loveliness and energy, but saddened perpetually by the shadow upon them of the great things from which they shrink. His morality is all sympathy; and it is this sympathy, conveying into his work somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity, which makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist.

It is this which gives to his Madonnas their unique expression and charm. He has worked out in them a distinct and peculiar type, definite enough in his own mind, for he has painted it over and over again, sometimes one might think almost mechanically, as a pastime during that dark period when his thoughts were so heavy upon him. Hardly any collection of note is without one of these circular pictures, into which the attendant angels depress their heads so naïvely. Perhaps you have sometimes wondered why those peevish-looking Madonnas, conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty, attract you more and more, and often come back to you when the Sistine Madonna and the Virgins of Fra Angelico are forgotten. At first, contrasting them with those, you may have thought that there was something in them mean or abject even, for the abstract lines of the face have little nobleness, and the color is wan. For with Botticelli she too, though she holds in her hands the "Desire of all nations," is one of those who are neither

for Jehovah nor for His enemies; and her choice is on her face. The white light on it is cast up hard and cheerless from below, as when snow lies upon the ground, and the children look up with surprise at the strange whiteness of the ceiling. Her trouble is in the very caress of the mysterious child, whose gaze is always far from her, and who has already that sweet look of devotion which men have never been able altogether to love, and which still makes the born saint an object almost of suspicion to his earthly brethren. Once, indeed, he guides her hand to transcribe in a book the words of her exaltation, the *Ave*, and the *Magnificat*, and the *Gaude Maria*; and the young angels, glad to rouse her for a moment from her dejection, are eager to hold the inkhorn and to support the book. But the pen almost drops from her hand, and the high cold words have no meaning for her, and her true children are those others, among whom, in her rude home, the intolerable honor came to her, with that look of wistful inquiry on their irregular faces which you see in startled animals — gipsy children, such as those who, in Apennine villages, still hold out their long, brown arms to beg of you, but on Sundays become *enfants du cœur*,¹ with their thick black hair nicely combed, and fair white linen on their sunburnt throats.

What is strangest is that he carries this sentiment into classical subjects, its most complete expression being a picture in the *Uffizi*, of Venus rising from the sea, in which the grotesque emblems of the middle age, and a landscape full of its peculiar feeling, and even its strange draperies, powdered all over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies, frame a figure that reminds you of the faultless nude studies of Ingres. At first, perhaps, you are attracted only by a quaintness of design, which seems to recall all at once whatever you have read of Florence in the fifteenth century; afterwards you may think that this quaintness must be incongruous with the subject, and that the color is cadaverous or at least cold. And yet, the more you come to understand what imaginative coloring really is, that all color is no mere delightful quality of natural things, but a spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit, the better you will like this peculiar quality of color; and you will find that quaint design of Botticelli's a more direct inlet into the Greek temper than the works of the Greeks them-

¹ choir boys.

selves even of the finest period. Of the Greeks as they really were, of their difference from ourselves, of the aspects of their outward life, we know far more than Botticelli, or his most learned contemporaries; but for us long familiarity has taken off the edge of the lesson, and we are hardly conscious of what we owe to the Hellenic spirit. But in pictures like this of Botticelli's you have a record of the first impression made by it on minds turned back towards it, in almost painful aspiration, from a world in which it had been ignored so long; and in the passion, the energy, the industry of realization, with which Botticelli carries out his intention, is the exact measure of the legitimate influence over the human mind of the imaginative system of which this is perhaps the central myth. The light is indeed cold — mere sunless dawn; but a later painter would have cloyed you with sunshine; and you can see the better for that quietness in the morning air each long promontory, as it slopes down to the water's edge. Men go forth to their labors until the evening; but she is awake before them, and you might think that the sorrow in her face was at the thought of the whole long day of love yet to come. An emblematical figure of the wind blows hard across the grey water, moving forward the dainty-lipped shell on which she sails, the sea "showing his teeth," as it moves, in thin lines of foam, and sucking in, one by one, the falling roses, each severe in outline, plucked off short at the stalk, but embrowned a little, as Botticelli's flowers always are. Botticelli meant all this imagery to be altogether pleasurable; and it was partly an incompleteness of resources, inseparable from the art of that time, that subdued and chilled it. But this predilection for minor tones counts also; and what is unmistakable is the sadness with which he has conceived the goddess of pleasure, as the depositary of a great power over the lives of men.

I have said that the peculiar character of Botticelli is the result of a blending in him of a sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition, its attractiveness, its investiture at rarer moments in a character of loveliness and energy, with his consciousness of the shadow upon it of the great things from which it shrinks, and that this conveys into his work somewhat more than painting usually attains of the true complexion of humanity. He paints the story of the goddess of pleasure in other episodes besides that of her birth from the sea, but never without some shadow

of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers. He paints Madonnas, but they shrink from the pressure of the divine child, and plead in unmistakable undertones for a warmer, lower humanity. The same figure — tradition connects it with Simonetta, the Mistress of Giuliano de' Medici — appears again as Judith, returning home across the hill country, when the great deed is over, and the moment of revulsion come, when the olive branch in her hand is becoming a burthen; as *Justice*, sitting on a throne, but with a fixed look of self-hatred which makes the sword in her hand seem that of a suicide; and again as *Veritas*, in the allegorical picture of *Calumnia*, where one may note in passing the suggestiveness of an accident which identifies the image of Truth with the person of Venus. We might trace the same sentiment through his engravings; but his share in them is doubtful, and the object of this brief study has been attained, if I have defined aright the temper in which he worked.

But, after all, it may be asked, is a painter like Botticelli — a secondary painter, a proper subject for general criticism? There are a few great painters, like Michelangelo or Leonardo, whose work has become a force in general culture, partly for this very reason that they have absorbed into themselves all such workmen as Sandro Botticelli; and, over and above mere technical or antiquarian criticism, general criticism may be very well employed in that sort of interpretation which adjusts the position of these men to general culture, whereas smaller men can be the proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment. But, besides those great men, there is a certain number of artists who have a distinct faculty of their own by which they convey to us a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere; and these, too, have their place in general culture, and must be interpreted to it by those who have felt their charm strongly, and are often the object of a special diligence and a consideration wholly affectionate, just because there is not about them the stress of a great name and authority. Of this select number Botticelli is one. He has the freshness, the uncertain and diffident promise, which belong to the earlier Renaissance itself, and make it perhaps the most interesting period in the history of the mind. In studying his work one begins to understand to how great a place in human culture the art of Italy had been called.

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE

1878

Published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for August, with the words "Imaginary Portrait" prefixed to the title. The sketch is generally assumed to be to some extent spiritually, though by no means literally, autobiographical.

As Florian Deleal walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighborhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall and floor, and some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit — in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favorable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualized house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there — of which, indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture — half, tint and trace and accident of homely color and form,

from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their lives), really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates — descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the rooms — might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there — the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed 'a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fireplace of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight — an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures, glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of colored silks, among its lumber — a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighboring steeples; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is

false to suppose that a child's sense of beauty is dependent on any choiceness of special fineness in the objects which present themselves to it, though this indeed comes to be the rule with most of us in later life; earlier, in some degree, we see inwardly; and the child finds for itself, and with unstinted delight, a difference for the sense, in those whites and reds through the smoke on very homely buildings, and in the gold of the dandelions at the roadside, just beyond the houses, where not a handful of earth is virgin and untouched, in the lack of better ministries to its desire of beauty.

This house then stood not far beyond the gloom and rumors of the town, among high garden-walls, bright all summer-time with golden-rod and brown-and-golden wall-flower — *flos parietis*, as the children's Latin-reading father taught them to call it, while he was with them. Tracing back the threads of his complex spiritual habit, as he was used in after years to do, Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travellers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighboring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darkenesses which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells — a citadel of peace in the heart of the trouble — all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognized imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. Also, Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an *urbanity* literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the pale people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite satisfaction in the trimness and well-considered grace of certain things and persons he afterwards met with, here and there, in his way through the world.

So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly: things without ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the bird-cage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the

ease with which he learned, and at the quick-
ness of his memory. The perfume of the
little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the
air upon them like rain; while time seemed to
move ever more slowly to the murmur of the
bees in it, till it almost stood still on June
afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment,
seem the influences of the sensible
things which are tossed and fall and lie about
us, so, or so, in the environment of early child-
hood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover,
they affect us; with what capricious
attractions and associations they figure themselves
on the white paper, the smooth wax, of
our ingenuous souls, as "with lead in the
rock for ever," giving form and feature, and
as it were assigned house-room in our
memory, to early experiences of feeling and
thought, which abide with us ever afterwards,
thus, and not otherwise. The realities
and passions, the rumors of the greater
world-without, steal in upon us, each by its
own special little passage-way, through the
wall of custom about us; and never afterwards
quite detach themselves from this or that
accident, or trick, in the mode of their
first entrance to us. Our susceptibilities,
the discovery of our powers, manifold experiences
— our various experiences of the coming
and going of bodily pain, for instance —
belong to this or the other well-remembered
place in the material habitation — that
little white room with the window across
which the heavy blossoms could beat so peev-
ishly in the wind, with just that particular
catch or throb, such a sense of teasing in it,
on gusty mornings; and the early habitation
thus gradually becomes a sort of material
shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system
of visible symbolism interweaves itself through
all our thoughts and passions; and irresist-
ibly, little shapes, voices, accidents — the
angle at which the sun in the morning fell
on the pillow — become parts of the great
chain wherewith we are bound.

Thus far, for Florian, what all this had determined
was a peculiarly strong sense of home —
so forcible a motive with all of us —
prompting to us our customary love of the
earth, and the larger part of our fear of death,
that revulsion we have from it, as from some-
thing strange, untried, unfriendly; though
life-long imprisonment, they tell you, and
final banishment from home is a thing bit-
terer still; the looking forward to but a short
space, a mere childish *gouter*¹ and dessert of
it, before the end, being so great a resource

¹ lunch.

of effort to pilgrims and wayfarers, and the
soldier in distant quarters, and lending, in
lack of that, some power of solace to the
thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at
least — dead cheek by dead cheek, and with
the rain soaking in upon one from above.

So powerful is this instinct, and yet accidents
like those I have been speaking of so
mechanically determine it; its essence being
indeed the early familiar, as constituting our
ideal, or typical conception, of rest and security.
Out of so many possible conditions,
just this for you and that for me, brings ever
the unmistakable realization of the delightful
chez soi; this for the Englishman, for me
and you, with the closely drawn white curtain
and the shaded lamp; that, quite other,
for the wandering Arab, who folds his tent
every morning, and makes his sleeping-place
among haunted ruins or in old tombs.

With Florian then the sense of home became
singularly intense, his good fortune being
that the special character of his home was in
itself so essentially homelike. As after many
wanderings I have come to fancy that some
parts of Surrey and Kent are, for Englishmen,
the true landscape, true home-counties, by
right, partly, of a certain earthy warmth in
the yellow of the sand below their gorse-
bushes, and of a certain gray-blue mist after
rain, in the hollows of the hills there, welcome
to fatigued eyes, and never seen farther
south; so I think that the sort of house I
have described, with precisely those proportions
of red-brick and green, and with a just
perceptible monotony in the subdued order
of it, for its distinguishing note, is for English-
men at least typically homelike. And so for
Florian that general human instinct was re-
inforced by this special home-likeness in the
place his wandering soul had happened to
light on, as, in the second degree, its body
and earthly tabernacle; the sense of harmony
between his soul and its physical environ-
ment became, for a time at least, like perfectly
played music, and the life led there
singularly tranquil and filled with a curious
sense of self-possession. The love of security,
of an habitually undisputed standing-ground
or sleeping-place, came to count for much in
the generation and correcting of his thoughts,
and afterwards as a salutary principle of re-
straint in all his wanderings of spirit. The
wistful yearning towards home, in absence
from it, as the shadows of evening deepened,
and he followed in thought what was doing
there from hour to hour, interpreted to him
much of a yearning and regret he experienced

afterwards, towards he knew not what, out of strange ways of feeling and thought in which, from time to time, his spirit found itself alone; and in the tears shed in such absences there seemed always to be some soul-subduing foretaste of what his last tears might be.

And the sense of security could hardly have been deeper, the quiet of the child's soul being one with the quiet of its home, a place "inclosed" and "sealed." But upon this assured place, upon the child's assured soul which resembled it, there came floating in from the larger world without, as at windows left ajar unknowingly, or over the high garden walls, two streams of impressions, the sentiments of beauty and pain — recognitions of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of things, as a very real and somewhat tyrannous element in them — and of the sorrow of the world, of grown people and children and animals, as a thing not to be put by in them. From this point he could trace two predominant processes of mental change in him — the growth of an almost diseased sensibility to the spectacle of suffering, and, parallel with this, the rapid growth of a certain capacity of fascination by bright color and choice form — the sweet curvings, for instance, of the lips of those who seemed to him comely persons, modulated in such delicate unison to the things they said or sang, — marking early the activity in him of a more than customary sensuousness, "the lust of the eye," as the Preacher says, which might lead him, one day, how far! Could he have foreseen the weariness of the way! In music sometimes the two sorts of impressions came together, and he would weep, to the surprise of older people. Tears of joy too the child knew, also to older people's surprise; real tears, once, of relief from long-strung, childish expectation, when he found returned at evening, with new roses in her cheeks, the little sister who had been to a place where there was a wood, and brought back for him a treasure of fallen acorns, and black crow's feathers, and his peace at finding her again near him mingled all night with some intimate sense of the distant forest, the rumor of its breezes, with the glossy black-birds aslant and the branches lifted in them, and of the perfect nicety of the little cups that fell. So those two elementary apprehensions of the tenderness and of the color in things grew apace in him, and were seen by him afterwards to send their roots back into the beginnings of life.

Let me note first some of the occasions of his recognition of the element of pain in things — incidents, now and again, which seemed suddenly to awake in him the whole force of that sentiment which Goethe has called the *Weltschmerz*, and in which the concentrated sorrow of the world seemed suddenly to lie heavy upon him. A book lay in an old book-case, of which he cared to remember one picture — a woman sitting, with hands bound behind her, the dress, the cap, the hair, folded with a simplicity which touched him strangely, as if not by her own hands, but with some ambiguous care at the hands of others — Queen Marie Antoinette, on her way to execution — we all remember David's drawing, meant merely to make her ridiculous. The face that had been so high had learned to be mute and resistless; but out of its very resistlessness seemed now to call on men to have pity, and forbear; and he took note of that, as he closed the book, as a thing to look at again, if he should at any time find himself tempted to be cruel. Again, he would never quite forget the appeal in the small sister's face, in the garden under the lilacs, terrified at a spider lighted on her sleeve. He could trace back to the look then noted a certain mercy he conceived always for people in fear, even of little things, which seemed to make him, though but for a moment, capable of almost any sacrifice of himself. Impressible, susceptible persons, indeed, who had had their sorrows, lived about him; and this sensibility was due in part to the tacit influence of their presence, enforcing upon him habitually the fact that there are those who pass their days, as a matter of course, in a sort of "going quietly." Most poignantly of all he could recall, in unfading minutest circumstance, the cry on the stair, sounding bitterly through the house, and struck into his soul for ever, of an aged woman, his father's sister, come now to announce his death in distant India; how it seemed to make the aged woman like a child again; and, he knew not why, but this fancy was full of pity to him. There were the little sorrows of the dumb animals too — of the white angora, with a dark tail like an ermine's, and a face like a flower, who fell into a lingering sickness, and became quite delicately human in its valetudinarianism, and came to have a hundred different expressions of voice — how it grew worse and worse, till it began to feel the light too much for it, and at last, after one wild morning of pain, the little soul flickered away from the

body, quite worn to death already, and now but feebly retaining it.

So he wanted another pet; and as there were starlings about the place, which could be taught to speak, one of them was caught, and he meant to treat it kindly; but in the night its young ones could be heard crying after it, and the responsive cry of the mother-bird towards them; and at last, with the first light, though not till after some debate with himself, he went down and opened the cage, and saw a sharp bound of the prisoner up to her nestlings; and therewith came the sense of remorse, — that he too was become an accomplice in moving, to the limit of his small power, the springs and handles of that great machine in things, constructed so ingeniously to play pain-fugues on the delicate nerve-work of living creatures.

I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird's-nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws, compact at last, little accidents have their consequence; and thus it happened that as he walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves thereon — a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall, and he had wondered what might be behind it, and was now allowed to fill his arms with the flowers — flowers enough for all the old blue-china pots along the chimney-piece, making *fête* in the children's room. Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams at night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers, which seemed to open ruddily in thick, fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the banks on either side. Always afterwards, summer by summer, as the flowers came on, the blossom of the red hawthorn still seemed to him absolutely the reddest of all things; and the goodly crimson, still alive in the works of old Venetian masters or old Flemish tapestries, called out always from afar the recollection of the flame in those perishing little petals, as it pulsed gradually out of them, kept long in the drawers of an old

cabinet. Also then, for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free. A touch of regret or desire mingled all night with the remembered presence of the red flowers, and their perfume in the darkness about him: and the longing for some undivined, entire possession of them was the beginning of a revelation to him, growing ever clearer, with the coming of the gracious summer guise of fields and trees and persons in each succeeding year, of a certain, at times seemingly exclusive, predominance in his interests, of beautiful physical things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensible vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things, real enough to be of any weight or reckoning, in his house of thought. There were times when he could think of the necessity he was under of associating all thoughts to touch and sight, as a sympathetic link between himself and actual, feeling, living objects; a protest in favor of real men and women against mere grey, unreal abstractions; and he remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if so it be, of our human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us, and welcomed this thought as a kind of keeper and sentinel over his soul therein. But certainly he came more and more to be unable to care for or think of soul but as in an actual body, or of any world but that wherein are water and trees, and where men and women look so or so, and press actual hands. It was the trick even his pity learned, fastening those who suffered in any wise to his affections by a kind of sensible attachments. He would think of Julian, fallen into incurable sickness, as spoiled in the sweet blossom of his skin

like pale amber, and his honey-like hair; of Cecil, early dead, as cut off from the lilies, from golden summer days, from women's voices; and then what comforted him a little was the thought of the turning of the child's flesh to violets in the turf above him. And thinking of the very poor, it was not the things which most men care most for that he yearned to give them; but fairer roses, perhaps, and power to taste quite as they will, at their ease and not task-burdened, a certain desirable clear light in the new morning, through which sometimes he had noticed them, quite unconscious of it, on their way to their early toil.

So he yielded himself to these things, to be played upon by them like a musical instrument, and began to note with deepening watchfulness, but always with some puzzled, unutterable longing in his enjoyment, the phases of the seasons and of the growing or waning day, down even to the shadowy changes wrought on bare wall or ceiling — the light cast up from the snow, bringing out their darkest angles; the brown light in the cloud, which meant rain; that almost too austere clearness, in the protracted light of the lengthening day, before warm weather began, as if it lingered but to make a severer work-day, with the school-books opened earlier and later; that beam of June sunshine, at last, as he lay awake before the time, a way of gold-dust across the darkness; all the humming, the freshness, the perfume of the garden seemed to lie upon it — and coming in one afternoon in September, along the red gravel walk, to look for a basket of yellow crab-apples left in the cool, old parlor, he remembered it the more, and how the colors struck upon him, because a wasp on one bitten apple stung him, and he felt the passion of sudden, severe pain. For this too brought its curious reflections; and, in relief from it, he would wonder over it — how it had then been with him — puzzled at the depth of the charm or spell over him, which lay, for a little while at least, in the mere absence of pain; once, especially, when an older boy taught him to make flowers of sealing-wax, and he had burnt his hand badly at the lighted taper, and been unable to sleep. He remembered that also afterwards, as a sort of typical thing — a white vision of heat about him, clinging closely, through the languid scent of the ointments put upon the place to make it well.

Also, as he felt this pressure upon him of the sensible world, then, as often afterwards,

there would come another sort of curious questioning how the last impressions of eye and ear might happen to him, how they would find him — the scent of the last flower, the soft yellowness of the last morning, the last recognition of some object of affection, hand or voice; it could not be but that the latest look of the eyes, before their final closing, would be strangely vivid; one would go with the hot tears, the cry, the touch of the wistful bystander, impressed how deeply on one! or would it be, perhaps, a mere frail retiring of all things, great or little, away from one, into a level distance?

For with this desire of physical beauty mingled itself early the fear of death — the fear of death intensified by the desire of beauty. Hitherto he had never gazed upon dead faces, as sometimes, afterwards, at the Morgue in Paris, or in that fair cemetery at Munich, where all the dead must go and lie in state before burial, behind glass windows, among the flowers and incense and holy candles — the aged clergy with their sacred ornaments, the young men in their dancing-shoes and spotless white linen — after which visits, those waxen, resistless faces would always live with him for many days, making the broadest sunshine sickly. The child had heard indeed of the death of his father, and how, in the Indian station, a fever had taken him, so that though not in action he had yet died as a soldier; and hearing of the "resurrection of the just," he could think of him as still abroad in the world, somehow, for his protection — a grand though perhaps rather terrible figure, in beautiful soldier's things, like the figure in the picture of Joshua's Vision in the Bible — and of that round which the mourners moved so softly, and afterwards with such solemn singing, as but a worn-out garment left at a deserted lodging. So it was, until on a summer day he walked with his mother through a fair churchyard. In a bright dress, he rambled among the graves, in the gay weather, and so came, in one corner, upon an open grave for a child — a dark space on the brilliant grass — the black mould heaped up round it, weighing down the little jeweled branches of the dwarf rosebushes in flower. And therewith came, full-grown, never wholly to leave him, with the certainty that even children do sometimes die, the physical horror of death, with its wholly selfish recoil from the association of lower forms of life, and the suffocating weight above. No benign, grave figure in beautiful soldier's things any longer abroad

in the world for his protection! only a few poor, piteous bones; and above them, possibly, a certain sort of figure he hoped not to see. For sitting one day in the garden below an open window, he heard people talking, and could not but listen, how, in a sleepless hour, a sick woman had seen one of the dead sitting beside her, come to call her hence; and from the broken talk evolved with much clearness the notion that not all those dead people had really departed to the churchyard, nor were quite so motionless as they looked, but led a secret, half-fugitive life in their old homes, quite free by night, though sometimes visible in the day, dodging from room to room, with no great goodwill towards those who shared the place with them. All night the figure sat beside him in the reveries of his broken sleep, and was not quite gone in the morning — an odd, irreconcilable new member of the household, making the sweet familiar chambers unfriendly and suspect by its uncertain presence. He could have hated the dead he had pitied so, for being thus. Afterwards he came to think of those poor, home-returning ghosts, which all men have fancied to themselves — the *revenants* — pathetically, as crying, or beating with vain hands at the doors, as the wind came, their cries distinguishable in it as a wilder inner note. But, always making death more unfamiliar still, that old experience would ever, from time to time, return to him; even in the living he sometimes caught its likeness; at any time or place, in a moment, the faint atmosphere of the chamber of death would be breathed around him, and the image with the bound chin, the quaint smile, the straight stiff feet, shed itself across the air upon the bright carpet, amid the gayest company, or happiest communing with himself.

To most children the sombre questionings to which impressions like these attach themselves, if they come at all, are actually suggested by religious books, which therefore they often regard with much secret distaste, and dismiss, as far as possible, from their habitual thoughts as a too depressing element in life. To Florian such impressions, these misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of the years, of the relationship between life and death, had been suggested spontaneously in the natural course of his mental growth by a strong innate sense for the soberer tones in things, further strengthened by actual circumstances; and religious sentiment, that system of biblical ideas in which he had been

brought up, presented itself to him as a thing that might soften and dignify, and light up as with a "lively hope," a melancholy already deeply settled in him. So he yielded himself easily to religious impressions, and with a kind of mystical appetite for sacred things, the more as they came to him through a saintly person who loved him tenderly, and believed that this early preoccupation with them already marked the child out for a saint. He began to love, for their own sakes, church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen, and holy vessels, and fountains of pure water; and its hieratic purity and simplicity became the type of something he desired to have about him in actual life. He pored over the pictures in religious books, and knew by heart the exact mode in which the wrestling angel grasped Jacob, how Jacob looked in his mysterious sleep, how the bells and pomegranates were attached to the hem of Aaron's vestment, sounding sweetly as he glided over the turf of the holy place. His way of conceiving religion came then to be in effect what it ever afterwards remained — a sacred history indeed, but still more a sacred ideal, a transcendent version or representation, under intense and more expressive light and shade, of human life and its familiar or exceptional incidents, birth, death, marriage, youth, age, tears, joy, rest, sleep, waking — a mirror, towards which men might turn away their eyes from vanity and dullness, and see themselves therein as angels, with their daily meat and drink, even, become a kind of sacred transaction — a complementary strain or burden,¹ applied to our every-day existence, whereby the stray snatches of music in it re-set themselves, and fall into the scheme of some higher and more consistent harmony. A place adumbrated itself in his thoughts, wherein those sacred personalities, which are at once the reflex and the pattern of our nobler phases of life, housed themselves; and this region in his intellectual scheme all subsequent experience did but tend still further to realize and define. Some ideal, hieratic persons he would always need to occupy it and keep a warmth there. And he could hardly understand those who felt no such need at all, finding themselves quite happy without such heavenly companionship, and sacred double of their life, beside them.

Thus a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts,

¹ bass under-part.

Angels might be met by the way, under English elm or beech-tree; mere messengers seemed like angels, bound on celestial errands; a deep mysticity brooded over real meetings and partings; marriages were made in heaven; and deaths also, with hands of angels thereupon, to bear soul and body quietly asunder, each to its appointed rest. All the acts and accidents of daily life borrowed a sacred color and significance; the very colors of things became themselves weighty with meanings like the sacred stuffs of Moses' tabernacle, full of penitence or peace. Sentiment, congruous in the first instance only with those divine transactions, the deep, effusive unction of the House of Bethany, was assumed as the due attitude for the reception of our every-day existence; and for a time he walked through the world in a sustained, not unpleasurable awe, generated by the habitual recognition, beside every circumstance and event of life, of its celestial correspondent.

Sensibility — the desire of physical beauty — a strange biblical awe, which made any reference to the unseen act on him like solemn music — these qualities the child took away with him, when, at about the age of twelve years, he left the old house, and was taken to live in another place. He had never left his home before, and, anticipating much from this change, had long dreamed over it, jealously counting the days till the time fixed for departure should come; had been a little care-

less about others even, in his strong desire for it — when Lewis fell sick, for instance, and they must wait still two days longer. At last the morning came, very fine; and all things — the very pavement with its dust, at the roadside — seemed to have a white, pearl-like lustre in them. They were to travel by a favorite road on which he had often walked a certain distance, and on one of those two prisoner days, when Lewis was sick, had walked farther than ever before, in his great desire to reach the new place. They had started and gone a little way when a pet bird was found to have been left behind, and must even now — so it presented itself to him — have already all the appealing fierceness and wild self-pity at heart of one left by others to perish of hunger in a closed house; and he returned to fetch it, himself in hardly less stormy distress. But as he passed in search of it from room to room, lying so pale, with a look of meekness in their denudation, and at last through that little stripped white room, the aspect of the place touched him like the face of one dead; and a clinging back towards it came over him, so intense that he knew it would last long, and spoiling all his pleasure in the realization of a thing so eagerly anticipated. And so, with the bird found, but himself in an agony of homesickness, thus capriciously sprung up within him, he was driven quickly away, far into the rural distance, so fondly speculated on, of that favorite country road.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894)

Robert Louis Stevenson, the son of Thomas Stevenson, a civil engineer, was born at Edinburgh, November 13, 1850. He was educated at the University of Edinburgh and studied both engineering and law. His bent was strongly toward writing, and in the early seventies he began to contribute essays to the *Cornhill* and other magazines. He took two unconventional journeys, one by canoe through the rivers and canals of Belgium and France, and another by donkey through the Cévennes Mountains, which became the material of two books, *An Inland Voyage* (1878), and *Travels with a Donkey* (1879). In the latter year Stevenson journeyed to San Francisco to marry Mrs. Osbourne whom he had known at Fontainebleau. His health had been precarious from childhood, and now followed a number of years of invalidism at Davos, Hyères, and Bournemouth. In these years he made his literary reputation with *Treasure Island* (1882), *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and *Kidnapped* (1886). In 1887 he returned to America, and, after a winter at Saranac Lake, he chartered a vessel for a cruise to the South Seas. This led him eventually to Samoa, where he settled in 1890 at Vailima. He died in 1894.

Stevenson was a versatile writer in fiction, essay, poetry, and drama. More than most English writers he was animated by sheer æsthetic enthusiasm for literature as a fine art. He held that romance was a necessary element in life, and that fiction was as necessary to grown people as play to children. The highest point of romance to him was fine conduct, springing from loyalty and a sense of duty. In the latter days of the nineteenth century, when men were driven to despair of a world in which faith had been killed by science and the joy of life by industrialism, Stevenson continued to uphold the principle of life as worth while for its own sake, and struggle as justifying itself without question of reward. He belongs among the neo-stoics, in opposition to Walter Pater, who represents the neo-epicurean position.

The chief edition of Stevenson's works is the Biographical in twenty-seven volumes. His letters were edited by Sidney Colvin (1900) and his life was written by his cousin, Graham Balfour, in 1901. There are brief studies by Lloyd Osbourne and Frank A. Swinnerton. Essays on Stevenson to be noted are those by Henry James in *Partial Portraits*, and by Leslie Stephen in *Studies of a Biographer*.

A GOSSIP ON ROMANCE

1882

Published in *Longman's Magazine* for November, and later in the collection called *Memories and Portraits*. The essay is of special value as presenting the principles which underlay Stevenson's work as a reviver of the prose romance.

In anything fit to be called by the name of reading, the process itself should be absorbing and voluptuous; we should gloat over a book, be rapt clean out of ourselves, and rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought. The words, if the book be eloquent, should run thenceforward in our ears like the noise of breakers, and the story — if it be a story — repeat itself in a thousand colored pictures to the eye. It was for this last pleasure that we read so closely, and loved our books so dearly, in the bright, troubled period of boyhood: Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain sort of incident, like a pig for truffles. For my part, I liked a story to begin with an old wayside inn where, "towards the close of the year 17—," several gentlemen in three-cocked hats were playing bowls. A friend of mine preferred the Malabar coast in a storm, with a ship beating to westward, and a scowling fellow of herculean proportions striding along the beach; he, to be sure, was a pirate. This was further afield than my home-keeping fancy loved to travel, and designed altogether for a larger canvas than the tales that I affected. Give me a highwayman and I was full to the brim; a Jacobite would do, but the highwayman was my favorite dish. I can still hear that merry clatter of the hoofs along the moonlit lane; night and the coming of day are still related in my mind with the doings of John Rann or Jerry Abershaw;* and the words "postchaise," the "great North road," "ostler," and "nag," still sound in my ears like poetry. One and all, at least, and each with his particular fancy, we read story-books in childhood, not for eloquence or character or thought, but for

some quality of the brute incident. That quality was not mere bloodshed or wonder. Although each of these was welcome in its place, the charm for the sake of which we read depended on something different from either. My elders used to read novels aloud; and I can still remember four different passages which I heard, before I was ten, with the same keen and lasting pleasure. One I discovered long afterwards to be the admirable opening of *What will he Do with It?*¹ It was no wonder that I was pleased with that. The other three still remain unidentified. One is a little vague; it was about a dark, tall house at night, and people groping on the stairs by the light that escaped from the open door of a sickroom. In another, a lover left a ball, and went walking in a cool, dewy park, whence he could watch the lighted windows and the figures of the dancers as they moved. This was the most sentimental impression I think I had yet received, for a child is somewhat deaf to the sentimental. In the last, a poet, who had been tragically wrangling with his wife, walked forth on the sea-beach on a tempestuous night and witnessed the horrors of a wreck.² Different as they are, all these early favorites have a common note — they have all a touch of the romantic.

Drama is the poetry of conduct, romance the poetry of circumstance. The pleasure that we take in life is of two sorts — the active and the passive. Now we are conscious of a great command over our destiny; anon we are lifted up by circumstance, as by a breaking wave, and dashed we know not how into the future. Now we are pleased by our conduct, anon merely pleased by our surroundings. It would be hard to say which of these modes of satisfaction is the more effective, but the latter is surely the more constant. Conduct is three parts of life, they say; but I think they put it high. There is a vast deal in life and letters both which is not immoral, but simply a-moral; which either does not regard the human will at all, or deals with it in obvious and healthy relations; where the interest turns, not upon

¹ By Bulwer-Lytton (1858).

² Since traced by many obliging correspondents to the gallery of Charles Kingsley. (Stevenson's note.)

* Outlaws.

what a man shall choose to do, but on how he manages to do it; not on the passionate slips and hesitations of the conscience, but on the problems of the body and of the practical intelligence, in clean, open-air adventure, the shock of arms or the diplomacy of life. With such material as this it is impossible to build a play, for the serious theatre exists solely on moral grounds, and is a standing proof of the dissemination of the human conscience. But it is possible to build upon this ground the most joyous of verses, and the most lively, beautiful, and buoyant tales.

One thing in life calls for another; there is a fitness in events and places. The sight of a pleasant arbor puts it in our mind to sit there. One place suggests work, another idleness, a third early rising and long rambles in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it. And many of the happiest hours of life fleet by us in this vain attendance on the genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir, and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race; and when I was a child I tried in vain to invent appropriate games for them, as I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots again seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable, "miching mallecho." The inn at Burford Bridge, with its arbors and green garden and silent, eddying river — though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote some of his *Endymion* and Nelson parted from his Emma — still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind these old green shutters, some further business smolders, waiting for its hour. The old Hawes Inn at the Queen's Ferry makes a similar call upon my fancy. There it stands, apart from the town, beside the pier, in a climate of its own, half inland, half marine — in front, the ferry bubbling with the tide and the guardship swinging to her anchor; behind, the old garden with the trees. Americans

seek it already for the sake of Lovel and Oldbuck, who dined there at the beginning of *The Antiquary*. But you need not tell me — that is not all; there is some story, unrecorded or not yet complete, which must express the meaning of that inn more fully. So it is with names and faces; so it is with incidents that are idle and inconclusive in themselves, and yet seem like the beginning of some quaint romance, which the all-careless author leaves untold. How many of these romances have we not seen determined at their birth; how many people have met us with a look of meaning in their eye, and sunk at once into trivial acquaintances; to how many places have we not drawn near, with express intimations — "here my destiny awaits me" — and we have but dined there and passed on! I have lived both at the Hawes and Burford in a perpetual flutter, on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called me again at morning in one unbroken round of pleasure and suspense, nothing befell me in either worth remark. The man of the hour had not yet come; but some day, I think, a boat shall put off from the Queen's Ferry, fraught with a dear cargo, and some frosty night a horseman, on a tragic errand, rattle with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford.

Now this is one of the natural appetites with which any lively literature has to count. The desire for knowledge, I had almost added the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident. The dullest of clowns tells, or tries to tell, himself a story, as the feeblest of children uses invention in his play; and even as the imaginative grown person, joining in the game, at once enriches it with many delightful circumstances, the great creative writer shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream. The right kind of thing should fall out in the right kind of place; the right kind of thing should follow; and not only the characters talk aptly and think naturally, but all the circumstances in a tale answer one to another like notes in music. The threads of a story

1 Since the above was written I have tried to launch the boat with my own hand in *Kidnapped*. Some day, perhaps, I may try a rattle at the shutters. (Steven-son's note.)

come from time to time together, and make a picture in the web; the characters fall from time to time into some attitude to each other or to nature, which stamps the story home like an illustration. Crusoe recoiling from the footprint, Achilles shouting over against the Trojans, Ulysses bending the great bow, Christian running with his fingers in his ears, — these are each culminating moments in the legend, and each has been printed on the mind's eye forever. Other things we may forget; we may forget the words, although they are beautiful; we may forget the author's comment, although perhaps it was ingenious and true; but these epoch-making scenes, which put the last mark of truth upon a story and fill up at one blow our capacity for sympathetic pleasure, we so adopt into the very bosom of our mind that neither time nor tide can efface or weaken the impression. This, then, is the plastic part of literature: to embody character, thought, or emotion in some act or attitude that shall be remarkably striking to the mind's eye. This is the highest and hardest thing to do in words; the thing which, once accomplished, equally delights the schoolboy and the sage, and makes, in its own right, the quality of epics. Compared with this, all other purposes in literature, except the purely lyrical or the purely philosophic, are bastard in nature, facile of execution, and feeble in result. It is one thing to write about the inn at Burford, or to describe scenery with the word-painters; it is quite another to seize on the heart of the suggestion and make a country famous with a legend. It is one thing to remark and to dissect, with the most cutting logic, the complications of life and of the human spirit; it is quite another to give them body and blood in the story of Ajax or of Hamlet. The first is literature, but the second is something besides, for it is likewise art.

English people of the present day are apt, I know not why, to look somewhat down on incident, and reserve their admiration for the clink of teaspoons and the accents of the curate. It is thought clever to write a novel with no story at all, or at least with a very dull one. Reduced even to the lowest terms, a certain interest can be communicated by the art of narrative, a sense of human kinship stirred; and a kind of monotonous fitness, comparable to the words and air of "Sandy's Mull," preserved among the infinitesimal occurrences recorded. Some people work in this manner, with even a

strong touch. Mr. Trollope's inimitable clergymen arise to the mind in this connection. But even Mr. Trollope does not confine himself to chronicling small beer. Mr. Crawley's collision with the bishop's wife, Mr. Melnotte dallying in the deserted banquet-room,¹ are typical incidents, epically conceived, fitly embodying a crisis. Or again look at Thackeray. If Rawdon Crawley's blow were not delivered, *Vanity Fair* would cease to be a work of art. That scene is the chief ganglion of the tale; and the discharge of energy from Rawdon's fist is the reward and consolation of the reader. The end of *Esmond* is a yet wider excursion from the author's customary fields; the scene at Castlewood is pure Dumas; the great and wily English borrower has here borrowed from the great unblushing French thief; as usual, he has borrowed admirably well, and the breaking of the sword rounds off the best of all his books with a manly, martial note. But perhaps nothing can more strongly illustrate the necessity for marking incident than to compare the living fame of *Robinson Crusoe* with the discredit of *Clarissa Harlowe*. *Clarissa* is a book of a far more startling import, worked out, on a great canvas, with inimitable courage and unflagging art. It contains wit, character, passion, plot, conversations full of spirit and insight, letters sparkling with unstrained humanity; and if the death of the heroine be somewhat frigid and artificial, the last days of the hero strike the only note of what we now call Byronism, between the Elizabethans and Byron himself. And yet a little story of a shipwrecked sailor, with not a tenth part of the style nor a thousandth part of the wisdom, exploring none of the arcana of humanity and deprived of the perennial interest of love, goes on from edition to edition, while *Clarissa* lies upon the shelves unread. A friend of mine, a Welsh blacksmith, was twenty-five years old and could neither read nor write, when he heard a chapter of *Robinson* read aloud in a farm kitchen. Up to that moment he had sat content, huddled in his ignorance, but he left that farm another man. There were day-dreams, it appeared, divine day-dreams, written and printed and bound, and to be bought for money and enjoyed at pleasure. Down he sat that day, painfully learned to read Welsh, and returned to borrow the book. It had been lost, nor could he find another copy but one that was in English. Down he

¹ Crawley in *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, Melnotte in *The Way We Live Now*.

sat once more, learned English, and at length, and with entire delight, read *Robinson*. It is like the story of a love-chase. If he had heard a letter from *Clarissa*, would he have been fired with the same chivalrous ardor? I wonder. Yet *Clarissa* has every quality that can be shown in prose, one alone excepted — pictorial or picture-making romance. While *Robinson* depends, for the most part and with the overwhelming majority of its readers, on the charm of circumstance.

In the highest achievements of the art of words, the dramatic and the pictorial, the moral and romantic interest, rise and fall together by a common and organic law. Situation is animated with passion, passion clothed upon with situation. Neither exists for itself, but each inheres indissolubly with the other. This is high art; and not only the highest art possible in words, but the highest art of all, since it combines the greatest mass and diversity of the elements of truth and pleasure. Such are epics, and the few prose tales that have the epic weight. But as from a school of works, aping the creative, incident and romance are ruthlessly discarded, so may character and drama be omitted or subordinated to romance. There is one book, for example, more generally loved than Shakespeare, that captivates in childhood, and still delights in age — I mean the *Arabian Nights* — where you shall look in vain for moral or for intellectual interest. No human face or voice greets us among that wooden crowd of kings and genies, sorcerers and beggarmen. Adventure, in the most naked terms, furnishes forth the entertainment, and is found enough. Dumas approaches perhaps nearest of any modern to these Arabian authors, in the purely material charm of some of his romances. The early part of *Monte Cristo*, down to the finding of the treasure, is a piece of perfect storytelling; the man never breathed who shared these moving incidents without a tremor; and yet Faria is a thing of packthread and Dantès little more than a name. The sequel is one long-drawn error, gloomy, bloody, unnatural and dull; but as for these early chapters, I do not believe there is another volume extant where you can breathe the same unmingled atmosphere of romance. It is very thin and light, to be sure, as on a high mountain; but it is brisk and clear and sunny in proportion. I saw the other day, with envy, an old and very clever lady setting forth on a second or third voyage into *Monte Cristo*.

Here are stories which powerfully affect the reader, which can be reperused at any age, and where the characters are no more than puppets. The bony fist of the showman visibly propels them; their springs are an open secret; their faces are of wood; their bellies filled with bran; and yet we thrillingly partake of their adventures. And the point may be illustrated still further. The last interview between Lucy and Richard Feverel¹ is pure drama; more than that, it is the strongest scene, since Shakespeare, in the English tongue. Their first meeting by the river, on the other hand, is pure romance; it has nothing to do with character; it might happen to any other boy and maiden, and be none the less delightful for the change. And yet I think he would be a bold man who should choose between these passages. Thus in the same book we may have two scenes, each capital in its order: in the one, human passion, deep calling unto deep, shall utter its genuine voice; in the second, according circumstances, like instruments in tune, shall build up a trivial but desirable incident, such as we love to prefigure for ourselves; and in the end, in spite of the critics, we may hesitate to give the preference to either. The one may ask more genius — I do not say it does; but at least the other dwells as clearly in the memory.

True romantic art, again, makes a romance of all things. It reaches into the highest abstraction of the ideal; it does not refuse the most pedestrian realism. *Robinson Crusoe* is as realistic as it is romantic; both qualities are pushed to an extreme, and neither suffers. Nor does romance depend upon the material importance of the incidents. To deal with strong and deadly elements, banditti, pirates, war and murder, is to conjure with great names, and, in the event of failure, to double the disgrace. The arrival of Haydn and Consuelo at the Canon's villa² is a very trifling incident; yet we may read a dozen boisterous stories from beginning to end, and not receive so fresh and stirring an impression of adventure. It was the scene of *Crusoe* at the wreck, if I remember rightly, that so bewitched my blacksmith. Nor is the fact surprising. Every single article the castaway recovers from the hulk is "a joy for ever" to the man who reads of them. They are the things that should be found, and bare enumeration stirs the blood. I found a glimmer of the same interest the other day in a

¹ In Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.

² In George Sand's *Consuelo*.

new book, *The Sailor's Sweetheart*, by Mr. Clark Russell. The whole business of the brig *Morning Star* is very rightly felt and spiritedly written; but the clothes, the books, and the money satisfy the reader's mind like things to eat. We are dealing here with the old cut-and-dry, legitimate interest of treasure trove. But even treasure trove can be made dull. There are few people who have not groaned under the plethora of goods that fell to the lot of the Swiss Family Robinson, that dreary family. They found article after article, from milk kine to pieces of ordnance, a whole consignment; but no informing taste had presided over the selection, — there was no smack or relish in the invoice, and these riches left the fancy cold. The box of goods in Verne's *Mysterious Island* is another case in point: there was no gusto and no glamour about that; it might have come from a shop. But the two hundred and seventy-eight Australian sovereigns on board the *Morning Star* fell upon me like a surprise that I had expected; whole vistas of secondary stories, besides the one in hand, radiated forth from that discovery, as they radiate from a striking particular in life; and I was made for the moment as happy as a reader has a right to be.

To come at all at the nature of this quality of romance, we must bear in mind the peculiarity of our attitude to any art. No art produces illusion; in the theatre we never forget that we are in the theatre; and while we read a story, we sit wavering between two minds, now merely clapping our hands at the merit of the performance, now condescending to take an active part in fancy with the characters. This last is the triumph of romantic story-telling: when the reader consciously plays at being the hero, the scene is a good scene. Now in character studies the pleasure that we take is critical; we watch, we approve, we smile at incongruities, we are moved to sudden heats of sympathy for courage, suffering, or virtue. But the characters are still themselves, they are not us; the more clearly they are depicted, the more widely do they stand away from us, the more imperiously do they thrust us back into our place as a spectator. I cannot identify myself with Rawdon Crawley or with Eugène de Rastignac,¹ for I have scarce a hope or fear in common with them. It is not character but incident that woos us out of our reserve. Something happens as we desire to have it

happen to ourselves; some situation, that we have long dallied with in fancy, is realized in the story with enticing and appropriate details. Then we forget the characters; then we push the hero aside; then we plunge into the tale in our own person and bathe in fresh experience; and then, and then only, do we say we have been reading a romance. It is not only pleasurable things that we imagine in our day-dreams; there are lights in which we are willing to contemplate even the idea of our own death, — ways in which it seems as if it would amuse us to be cheated, wounded, or calumniated. It is thus possible to construct a story, even of tragic import, in which every incident, detail, and trick of circumstance shall be welcome to the reader's thoughts. Fiction is to the grown man what play is to the child; it is there that he changes the atmosphere and tenor of his life; and when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him at every turn, when he loves to recall it and dwells upon its recollection with entire delight, fiction is called romance.

Walter Scott is out and away the king of the romantics. *The Lady of the Lake* has no indisputable claim to be a poem beyond the inherent fitness and desirability of the tale. It is just such a story as a man would make up for himself, walking, in the best health and temper, through just such scenes as it is laid in. Hence it is that a charm dwells undefinable among these slovenly verses, as the unseen cuckoo fills the mountains with his note; hence, even after we have flung the book aside, the scenery and adventures remain present to the mind, a new and green possession, not unworthy of that beautiful name, *The Lady of the Lake*, or that direct, romantic opening — one of the most spirited and poetical in literature — "The stag at eve had drunk his fill." The same strength and the same weaknesses adorn and disfigure the novels. In that ill-written, ragged book, *The Pirate*, the figure of Cleveland — cast up by the sea on the resounding foreland of Dunrossness — moving, with the blood on his hands and the Spanish words on his tongue, among the simple islanders — singing a serenade under the window of his Shetland mistress — is conceived in the very highest manner of romantic invention. The words of his song, "Through groves of palm," sung in such a scene and by such a lover, clench, as in a nutshell, the emphatic contrast upon which the tale is built. In *Guy Mannering*,

¹ Crawley in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*; Rastignac in Balzac's *Père Goriot* and other tales.

again, every incident is delightful to the imagination; and the scene when Harry Bertram lands at Ellangowan is a model instance of romantic method.

"'I remember the tune well,' he says, 'though I cannot guess what should at present so strongly recall it to my memory.' He took his flageolet from his pocket and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the corresponding associations of a damsel. . . . She immediately took up the song —

"'Are these the links of Forth,' she said;
'Or are they the crooks of Dee,
Or the bonny woods of Warroch Head
That I so fain would see?'"

"'By heaven!' said Bertram, 'it is the very ballad.'"

On this quotation two remarks fall to be made. First, as an instance of modern feeling for romance, this famous touch of the flageolet and the old song is selected by Miss Braddon for omission. Miss Braddon's idea of a story, like Mrs. Todgers's idea of a wooden leg, were something strange to have expounded. As a matter of personal experience, Meg's appearance to old Mr. Bertram on the road, the ruins of Dorncleugh, the scene of the flageolet, and the Dominie's recognition of Harry, are the four strong notes that continue to ring in the mind after the book is laid aside. The second point is still more curious. The reader will observe a mark of excision in the passage as quoted by me. Well, here is how it runs in the original: "A damsel who, close behind a fine spring about half-way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen." A man who gave in such copy would be discharged from the staff of a daily paper. Scott has forgotten to prepare the reader for the presence of the "damsel"; he has forgotten to mention the spring and its relation to the ruin; and now, face to face with his omission, instead of trying back and starting fair, crams all this matter, tail foremost, into a single shuffling sentence. It is not merely bad English, or bad style; it is abominably bad narrative besides.

Certainly the contrast is remarkable; and it is one that throws a strong light upon the subject of this paper. For here we have a man of the finest creative instinct touching with perfect certainty and charm the romantic junctures of his story; and we find him utterly careless, almost, it would seem, incapable, in the technical matter of style, and

not only frequently weak, but frequently wrong in points of drama. In character parts, indeed, and particularly in the Scotch, he was delicate, strong, and truthful; but the trite, obliterated features of too many of his heroes have already wearied two generations of readers. At times his characters will speak with something far beyond propriety with a true heroic note; but on the next page they will be wading wearily forward with an ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole of words. The man who could conceive and write the character of Elspeth of the Craighburnfoot, as Scott has conceived and written it, had not only splendid romantic, but splendid tragic gifts. How comes it, then, that he could so often fob us off with languid, inarticulate twaddle?

It seems to me that the explanation is to be found in the very quality of his surprising merits. As his books are play to the reader, so were they play to him. He conjured up the romantic with delight, but he had hardly patience to describe it. He was a great day-dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions, but hardly a great artist; hardly, in the manifold sense, an artist at all. He pleased himself, and so he pleases us. Of the pleasures of his art he tasted fully; but of its toils and vigils and distresses never man knew less. A great romantic — an idle child.

THE LANTERN-BEARERS

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for February, 1888, and reprinted in *Across the Plains*, 1892. It contains an amplification of Stevenson's doctrine of romance, and his attitude toward the realistic school of fiction.

I

These boys congregated every autumn about a certain easterly fisher-village, where they tasted in a high degree the glory of existence. The place was created seemingly on purpose for the diversion of young gentlemen. A street or two of houses, mostly red and many of them tiled; a number of fine trees clustered about the manse and the kirk-yard, and turning the chief street into a shady alley; many little gardens more than usually bright with flowers; nets a-drying, and fisher-wives scolding in the backward parts; a smell of fish, a genial smell of seaweed; whiffs of blowing sand at the street corners; shops with golf-balls and bottled

lollipops; another shop with penny pickwicks (that remarkable cigar) and the *London Journal*, dear to me for its startling pictures, and a few novels, dear for their suggestive names: such, as well as memory serves me, were the ingredients of the town. These, you are to conceive posted on a spit between two sandy bays, and sparsely flanked with villas — enough for the boys to lodge in with their subsidiary parents, not enough (not yet enough) to cocknify the scene: a haven in the rocks in front: in front of that, a file of grey islets: to the left, endless links and sand-wreaths, a wilderness of hiding-holes, alive with popping rabbits and soaring gulls; to the right, a range of seaward crags, one rugged brow beyond another; the ruins of a mighty and ancient fortress on the brink of one; coves between — now charmed into sunshine quiet, now whistling with wind and clamorous with bursting surges; the dens and sheltered hollows redolent of thyme and southernwood, the air at the cliff's edge brisk and clean and pungent of the sea — in front of all, the Bass Rock, tilted seaward like a doubtful bather, the surf ringing it with white, the solan-geese hanging round its summit like a great and glittering smoke. This choice piece of sea-board was sacred, besides, to the wrecker; and the Bass, in the eye of fancy, still flew the colors of King James; and in the ear of fancy the arches of Tantallon still rang with horse-shoe iron, and echoed to the commands of Bell-the-Cat.¹

There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part, but the embarrassment of pleasure. You might golf if you wanted; but I seem to have been better employed. You might secrete yourself in the Lady's Walk, a certain sunless dingle of elders, all mossed over by the damp as green as grass, and dotted here and there by the stream-side with roofless walls, the cold homes of anchorites. To fit themselves for life, and with a special eye to acquire the art of smoking, it was even common for the boys to harbor there; and you might have seen a single penny pickwick, honestly shared in lengths with a blunt knife, bestrew the glen with these apprentices. Again, you might join our fishing-parties, where we sat perched as thick as solan-geese, a covey of little anglers, boy and girl, angling over each other's heads, to the much entanglement of lines and loss of podleys and consequent

shrill recrimination — shrill as the geese themselves. Indeed, had that been all, you might have done this often; but though fishing be a fine pastime, the podley is scarce to be regarded as a dainty for the table; and it was a point of honor that a boy should eat all that he had taken. Or again, you might climb the Law, where the whale's jawbone stood landmark in the buzzing wind, and behold the face of many counties, and the smoke and spires of many towns, and the sails of distant ships. You might bathe, now in the flaws of fine weather, that we pathetically call our summer, now in a gale of wind, with the sand scouring your bare hide, your clothes thrashing abroad from underneath their guardian stone, the froth of the great breakers casting you headlong ere it had drowned your knees. Or you might explore the tidal rocks, above all in the ebb of spring, when the very roots of the hills were for the nonce discovered; following my leader from one group to another, groping in slippery tangle for the wreck of ships, wading in pools after the abominable creatures of the sea, and ever with an eye cast backward on the march of the tide and the menaced line of your retreat. And then you might go Crusoeing, a word that covers all extempore eating in the open air: digging perhaps a house under the margin of the links, kindling a fire of the sea-ware, and cooking apples there — if they were truly apples, for I sometimes suppose the merchant must have played us off with some inferior and quite local fruit, capable of resolving, in the neighborhood of fire, into mere sand and smoke and iodine; or perhaps pushing to Tantallon, you might lunch on sandwiches and visions in the grassy court, while the wind hummed in the crumbling turrets; or clambering along the coast, eat geans² (the worst, I must suppose, in Christendom) from an adventurous gean-tree that had taken root under a cliff, where it was shaken with an ague of east wind, and silvered after gales with salt, and grew so foreign among its bleak surroundings that to eat of its produce was an adventure in itself.

There are mingled some dismal memories with so many that were joyous. Of the fisher-wife, for instance, who had cut her throat at Canty Bay; and of how I ran with the other children to the top of the Quadrant, and beheld a posse of silent people escorting a cart, and on the cart, bound in a chair, her throat bandaged, and the bandage all bloody — horror! — the fisher-wife her-

¹ The nickname of Archibald Douglas, fifth Earl of Angus, died 1514. He entertained Marmion, in Scott's poem, at his castle of Tantallon.

² wild cherries.

self, who continued thenceforth to hag-ride my thoughts, and even to-day (as I recall the scene) darkens daylight. She was lodged in the little old jail in the chief street; but whether or no she died there, with a wise terror of the worst, I never inquired. She had been tippling; it was but a dingy tragedy; and it seems strange and hard that, after all these years, the poor crazy sinner should be still pilloried on her cart in the scrap-book of my memory. Nor shall I readily forget a certain house in the Quadrant where a visitor died, and a dark old woman continued to dwell alone with the dead body; nor how this old woman conceived a hatred to myself and one of my cousins, and in the dread hour of the dusk, as we were clambering on the garden-walls, opened a window in that house of mortality and cursed us in a shrill voice and with a marrowy choice of language. It was a pair of very colorless urchins that fled down the lane from this remarkable experience! But I recall with a more doubtful sentiment, compounded out of fear and exultation, the coil of equinoctial tempests; trumpeting squalls, scouring flaws of rain; the boats with their reefed lug-sails scudding for the harbor mouth, where danger lay, for it was hard to make when the wind had any east in it; the wives clustered with blowing shawls at the pierhead, where (if fate was against them) they might see boat and husband and sons — their whole wealth and their whole family — engulfed under their eyes; and (what I saw but once) a troop of neighbors forcing such an unfortunate homeward, and she squalling and battling in their midst, a figure scarcely human, a tragic Mænad.

These are things that I recall with interest; but what my memory dwells upon the most I have been all this while withholding. It was a sport peculiar to the place, and indeed to a week or so of our two months' holiday there. Maybe it still flourishes in its native spot; for boys and their pastimes are swayed by periodic forces inscrutable to man; so that tops and marbles reappear in their due season, regular like the sun and moon; and the harmless art of knucklebones has seen the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the United States. It may still flourish in its native spot, but nowhere else, I am persuaded; for I tried myself to introduce it on Tweedside, and was defeated lamentably; its charm being quite local, like a country wine that cannot be exported.

The idle manner of it was this:

Toward the end of September, when school-time was drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of luminary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigor of the game, a buttoned top-coat. They smelled noisomely of blistered tin; they never burned aright, though they would always burn our fingers; their use was naught; the pleasure of them merely fanciful; and yet a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat asked for nothing more. The fishermen used lanterns about their boats, and it was from them, I suppose, that we had got the hint; but theirs were not bull's-eyes, nor did we ever play at being fishermen. The police carried them at their belts, and we had plainly copied them in that; yet we did not pretend to be policemen. Burglars, indeed, we may have had some haunting thoughts of; and we had certainly an eye to past ages when lanterns were more common, and to certain story-books in which we had found them to figure very largely. But take it for all in all, the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us.

When two of these asses met, there would be an anxious "Have you got your lantern?" and a gratified "Yes!" That was the shibboleth, and very needful too; for, as it was the rule to keep our glory contained, none could recognize a lantern-bearer, unless (like the pole-cat) by the smell. Four or five would sometimes climb into the belly of a ten-man lugger, with nothing but the thwarts above them — for the cabin was usually locked; or choose out some hollow of the links where the wind might whistle overhead. There the coats would be unbuttoned and the bull's-eye discovered; and in the chequering glimmer, under the huge windy hall of the night, and cheered by a rich steam of toasting tinware, these fortunate young gentlemen would crouch together in the cold sand of the links or on the scaly bilges of the fishing-boat, and delight themselves with inappropriate talk. Woe is me that I may not give some specimens — some of their foresights of life, or deep inquiries into the rudiments of man and nature, these were so fiery and so innocent, they were so

richly silly, so romantically young. But the talk, at any rate, was but a condiment; and these gatherings themselves only accidents in the career of the lantern-bearer. The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public; a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool's heart, to know you had a bull's-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge.

2

It is said that a poet has died young in the breast of the most stolid. It may be contended, rather, that this (somewhat minor) bard in almost every case survives, and is the spice of life to his possessor. Justice is not done to the versatility and the unplumbed childishness of man's imagination. His life from without may seem but a rude mound of mud; there will be some golden chamber at the heart of it, in which he dwells delighted; and for as dark as his pathway seems to the observer, he will have some kind of a bull's-eye at his belt.

It would be hard to pick out a career more cheerless than that of Dancer, the miser, as he figures in the "Old Bailey Reports," a prey to the most sordid persecutions, the butt of his neighborhood, betrayed by his hired man, his house beleaguered by the impish school-boy, and he himself grinding and fuming and impotently fleeing to the law against these pin-pricks. You marvel at first that anyone should willingly prolong a life so destitute of charm and dignity; and then you call to memory that had he chosen, had he ceased to be a miser, he could have been freed at once from these trials, and might have built himself a castle and gone escorted by a squadron. For the love of more recondite joys, which we cannot estimate, which, it may be, we should envy, the man had willingly forgone both comfort and consideration. "His mind to him a kingdom was"; and sure enough, digging into that mind, which seems at first a dust-heap, we unearth some priceless jewels. For Dancer must have had the love of power and the disdain of using it, a noble character in itself; disdain of many pleasures, a chief part of what is commonly called wisdom; disdain of the inevitable end, that finest trait of mankind; scorn of men's opinions, another

element of virtue; and at the back of all, a conscience just like yours and mine, whining like a cur, swindling like a thimble-rigger, but still pointing (there or thereabout) to some conventional standard. Here were a cabinet portrait to which Hawthorne perhaps had done justice; and yet not Hawthorne either, for he was mildly minded, and it lay not in him to create for us that throb of the miser's pulse, his fretful energy of gusto, his vast arms of ambition clutching in he knows not what: insatiable, insane, a god with a muck-rake. Thus, at least, looking in the bosom of the miser, consideration detects the poet in the full tide of life, with more, indeed, of the poetic fire than usually goes to epics; and tracing that mean man about his cold hearth, and to and fro in his uncomfortable house, spies within him a blazing bonfire of delight. And so with others, who do not live by bread alone, but by some cherished and perhaps fantastic pleasure; who are meat salesmen to the external eye, and possibly to themselves are Shakespeares, Napoleons, or Beethovens; who have not one virtue to rub against another in the field of active life, and yet perhaps, in the life of contemplation, sit with the saints. We see them on the street, and we can count their buttons; but Heaven knows in what they pride themselves! Heaven knows where they have set their treasure!

There is one fable that touches very near the quick of life; the fable of the monk who passed into the woods, heard a bird break into song, hearkened for a trill or two, and found himself on his return a stranger at his convent gates; for he had been absent fifty years, and of all his comrades there survived but one to recognize him. It is not only in the woods that this enchanter carols, though perhaps he is native there. He sings in the most doleful places. The miser hears him and chuckles, and the days are moments. With no more apparatus than an ill-smelling lantern I have evoked him on the naked links. All life that is not merely mechanical is spun out of two strands: seeking for that bird and hearing him. And it is just this that makes life so hard to value, and the delight of each so incommunicable. And just a knowledge of this, and a remembrance of those fortunate hours in which the bird has sung to us, that fills us with such wonder when we turn the pages of the realist. There, to be sure, we find a picture of life in so far as it consists of mud and of old iron, cheap desires and cheap fears, that which we are

ashamed to remember and that which we are careless whether we forget; but of the note of that time-devouring nightingale we hear no news.

The case of these writers of romance is most obscure. They have been boys and youths; they have lingered outside the window of the beloved, who was then most probably writing to someone else; they have sat before a sheet of paper, and felt themselves mere continents of congested poetry, not one line of which would flow; they have walked alone in the woods, they have walked in cities under the countless lamps; they have been to sea, they have hated, they have feared, they have longed to knife a man, and maybe done it; the wild taste of life has stung their palate. Or, if you deny them all the rest, one pleasure at least they have tasted to the full — their books are there to prove it — the keen pleasure of successful literary composition. And yet they fill the globe with volumes, whose cleverness inspires me with despairing admiration, and whose consistent falsity to all I care to call existence, with despairing wrath. If I had no better hope than to continue to revolve among the dreary and petty businesses, and to be moved by the paltry hopes and fears with which they surround and animate their heroes, I declare I would die now. But there has never an hour of mine gone quite so dully yet; if it were spent waiting at a railway junction, I would have some scattering thoughts, I could count some grains of memory, compared to which the whole of one of these romances seems but dross.

These writers would retort (if I take them properly) that this was very true; that it was the same with themselves and other persons of (what they call) the artistic temperament; that in this we were exceptional, and should apparently be ashamed of ourselves; but that our works must deal exclusively with (what they call) the average man, who was a prodigious dull fellow, and quite dead to all but the paltriest considerations. I accept the issue. We can only know others by ourselves. The artistic temperament (a plague on the expression!) does not make us different from our fellowmen, or it would make us incapable of writing novels; and the average man (a murrain on the word!) is just like you and me, or he would not be average. It was Whitman who stamped a kind of Birmingham sacredness upon the latter phrase; but Whitman knew very well, and showed very nobly, that the average man was full of joys

and full of poetry of his own. And this harping on life's dulness and man's meanness is a loud profession of incompetence; it is one of two things: the cry of the blind eye, *I cannot see*, or the complaint of the dumb tongue, *I cannot utter*. To draw a life without delights is to prove I have not realized it. To picture a man without some sort of poetry — well, it goes near to prove my case, for it shows an author may have little enough. To see Dancer only as a dirty, old, small-minded, impotently fuming man, in a dirty house, besieged by Harrow boys, and probably beset by small attorneys, is to show myself as keen an observer as . . . the Harrow boys. But these young gentlemen (with a more becoming modesty) were content to pluck Dancer by the coat-tails; they did not suppose they had surprised his secret or could put him living in a book: and it is there my error would have lain. Or say that in the same romance — I continue to call these books romances, in the hope of giving pain — say that in the same romance, which now begins really to take shape, I should leave to speak of Dancer, and follow instead the Harrow boys; and say that I came on some such business as that of my lantern-bearers on the links, and described the boys as very cold, spat upon by illuries of rain, and drearly surrounded, all of which they were; and their talk as silly and indecent, which it certainly was. I might upon these lines, and had I Zola's genius, turn out, in a page or so, a gem of literary art, render the lantern-light with the touches of a master, and lay on the indecency with the ungrudging hand of love; and when all was done, what a triumph would my picture be of shallowness and dulness! how it would have missed the point! how it would have belied the boys! To the ear of the stenographer, the talk is merely silly and indecent; but ask the boys themselves, and they are discussing (as it is highly proper they should) the possibilities of existence. To the eye of the observer they are wet and cold and drearly surrounded; but ask themselves, and they are in the heaven of recondite pleasure, the ground of which is an ill-smelling lantern.

3

For, to repeat, the ground of a man's joy is often hard to hit. It may hinge at times upon a mere accessory, like the lantern, it may reside, like Dancer's in the mysterious inwards of psychology. It may consist with perpetual failure, and find exercise in the continued chase. It has so little bond with ex-

ternals (such as the observer scribbles in his note-book) that it may even touch them not; and the man's true life, for which he consents to live, lie altogether in the field of fancy. The clergyman, in his spare hours, may be winning battles, the farmer sailing ships, the banker reaping triumph in the arts: all leading another life, plying another trade from that they chose; like the poet's house-builder, who, after all, is cased in stone,

"By his fireside, as impotent fancy prompts,
Rebuilds it to his liking."

In such a case the poetry runs underground. The observer (poor soul, with his documents!) is all abroad. For to look at the man is but to court deception. We shall see the trunk from which he draws his nourishment; but he himself is above and abroad in the green dome of foliage, hummed through by winds and nested in by nightingales. And the true realism were that of the poets, to climb up after him like a squirrel, and catch some glimpse of the heaven for which he lives. And the true realism, always and everywhere, is that of the poets to find out where joy resides, and give it a voice far beyond singing.

For to miss the joy is to miss all. In the joy of the actors lies the sense of any action. That is the explanation, that the excuse. To one who has not the secret of the lanterns, the scene upon the links is meaningless. And hence the haunting and truly spectral unreality of realistic books. Hence, when we read the English realists, the incredulous wonder with which we observe the hero's constancy under the submerging tide of dulness, and how he bears up with his jibbing sweet-heart, and endures the chatter of idiot girls, and stands by his whole unfeathered wilderness of an existence, instead of seeking relief in drink or foreign travel. Hence in the French, in that meat-market of middle-aged sensuality, the disgusted surprise with which we see the hero drift sidelong, and practically quite untempted, into every description of misconduct and dishonor. In each, we miss the personal poetry, the enchanted atmosphere, that rainbow work of fancy that clothes what is naked and seems to ennoble what is base; in each, life falls dead like dough, instead of soaring away like a balloon into the colors of the sunset; each is true, each inconceivable; for no man lives in the external truth, among salts and acids, but in the warm, phantasmagoric chamber of his brain, with the painted windows and the storied walls.

Of this falsity we have had a recent example from a man who knows far better — Tolstoy's *Powers of Darkness*. Here is a piece full of force and truth, yet quite untrue. For before Mikita was led into so dire a situation he was tempted, and temptations are beautiful at least in part; and a work which dwells on the ugliness of crime and gives no hint of any loveliness in the temptation, sins against the modesty of life, and even when a Tolstoy writes it, sinks to melodrama. The peasants are not understood; they saw their life in fairer colors; even the deaf girl was clothed in poetry for Mikita, or he had never fallen. And so, once again, even an Old Bailey melodrama, without some brightness of poetry and lustre of existence, falls into the inconceivable and ranks with fairy tales.

4

In nobler books we are moved with something like the emotions of life; and this emotion is very variously provoked. We are so moved when Levine labors in the field,¹ when André² sinks beyond emotion, when Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough meet beside the river,³ when Antony, "not cowardly, puts off his helmet,"⁴ when Kent has infinite pity on the dying Lear, when, in Dostoevsky's *Despised and Rejected*, the uncomplaining hero drains his cup of suffering and virtue. These are notes that please the great heart of man. Not only love, and the fields, and the bright face of danger, but sacrifice and death and unmerited suffering humbly supported, touch in us the vein of the poetic. We love to think of them, we long to try them, we are humbly hopeful that we may prove heroes also.

We have heard, perhaps, too much of lesser matters. Here is the door, here is the open air.

*Itur in antiquam silvam.*⁵

PULVIS ET UMBRA

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for April, 1888, and reprinted in the 1892 collection called *Across the Plains*. The title ("Dust and a Shadow") is from an ode of Horace's (IV, 7): "When we descend where father Æneas, rich

1 In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.

2 In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

3 In Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.

4 In Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

5 Let us go into the ancient wood.

Tullus, and Ancus abide, we become dust and a shade." This essay, like Pater's Conclusion to *Studies in the Renaissance*, suggests a reconstruction of ethical thought in the light of the discoveries of science, but along very different lines.

We look for some reward of our endeavors and are disappointed; not success, not happiness, not even peace of conscience, crowns our ineffectual efforts to do well. Our frailties are invincible, our virtues barren; the battle goes sore against us to the going down of the sun. The canting moralist tells us of right and wrong; and we look abroad, even on the face of our small earth, and find them change with every climate, and no country where some action is not honored for a virtue and none where it is not branded for a vice; and we look in our experience, and find no vital congruity in the wisest rules, but at the best a municipal fitness. It is not strange if we are tempted to despair of good. We ask too much. Our religions and moralities have been trimmed to flatter us, till they are all emasculate and sentimentalized, and only please and weaken. Truth is of a rougher strain. In the harsh face of life, faith can read a bracing gospel. The human race is a thing more ancient than the Ten Commandments; and the bones and revolutions of the Kosmos, in whose joints we are but moss and fungus, more ancient still.

Of the Kosmos in the last resort, science reports many doubtful things and all of them appalling. There seems no substance to this solid globe on which we stamp, — nothing but symbols and ratios. Symbols and ratios carry us and bring us forth and beat us down; gravity, that swings the incommensurable suns and worlds through space, is but a figment varying inversely as the squares of distances; and the suns and worlds themselves, imponderable figures of abstraction — NH_3 and H_2O . Consideration dares not dwell upon this view; that way madness lies; science carries us into zones of speculation where there is no habitable city for the mind of man.

But take the Kosmos with a grosser faith, as our senses give it us. We behold space sown with rotatory islands, suns and worlds and the shards and wrecks of systems; some, like the sun, still blazing; some rotting, like the earth; others, like the moon, stable in desolation. All of these we take to be made of something we call matter — a thing which no analysis can help us to conceive, to whose

incredible properties no familiarities can reconcile our minds. This stuff, when not purified by the lustration of fire, rots uncleanly into something we call life; seized through all its atoms with a pediculous malady; swelling in tumors that become independent, sometimes even (by an abhorrent prodigy) locomotory; one splitting into millions, millions cohering into one, as the malady proceeds through varying stages. This vital putrescence of the dust, used as we are to it, yet strikes us with occasional disgust, and the profusion of worms in a piece of ancient turf, or the air of a marsh darkened with insects, will sometimes check our breathing so that we aspire for cleaner places. But none is clean: the moving sand is infected with lice; the pure spring, where it bursts out of the mountain, is a mere issue of worms; even in the hard rock the crystal is forming.

In two main shapes this eruption covers the countenance of the earth: the animal and the vegetable: one in some degree the inversion of the other: the second rooted to the spot; the first coming detached out of its natal mud, and scurrying abroad with the myriad feet of insects, or towering into the heavens on the wings of birds — a thing so incomprehensible that, if it be well considered, the heart stops. To what passes with the anchored vermin, we have little clue: doubtless they have their joys and sorrows, their delights and killing agonies — it appears not how. But of the locomotory, to which we ourselves belong, we can tell more. These share with us a thousand miracles: the miracles of sight, of hearing, of the projection of sound, things that bridge space; the miracles of memory and reason, by which the present is conceived, and when it is gone its image kept living in the brains of man and brute; the miracle of reproduction, with its imperious desires and staggering consequences. And to put the last touch upon this mountain mass of the revolting and the inconceivable, all these prey upon each other, lives tearing other lives in pieces, cramming them inside themselves, and by that summary process growing fat: the vegetarian, the whale, perhaps the tree, not less than the lion of the desert — for the vegetarian is only the eater of the dumb.

Meanwhile our rotary island loaded with predatory life, and more drenched with blood, both animal and vegetable, than ever mutinied ship, scuds through space with unimaginable speed, and turns alternate cheeks

to the reverberation of a blazing world ninety million miles away.

What a monstrous spectre is this man, the disease of the agglutinated dust, lifting alternate feet or lying drugged with slumber; killing, feeding, growing, bringing forth small copies of himself; grown upon with hair like grass, fitted with eyes that move and glitter in his face; a thing to set children screaming; — and yet looked at nearer, known as his fellows know him, how surprising are his attributes! Poor soul, here for so little, cast among so many hardships, filled with desires so incommensurate and so inconsistent, savagely surrounded, savagely descended, irremediably condemned to prey upon his fellow lives: who should have blamed him had he been of a piece with his destiny and a being merely barbarous? And we look and behold him instead filled with imperfect virtues: infinitely childish, often admirably valiant, often touchingly kind; sitting down, amidst his momentary life, to debate of right and wrong and the attributes of the deity; rising up to do battle for an egg or die for an idea; singling out his friends and his mate with cordial affection; bringing forth in pain, rearing with long-suffering solicitude, his young. To touch the heart of his mystery, we find in him one thought, strange to the point of lunacy: the thought of duty; the thought of something owing to himself, to his neighbor, to his God; an ideal of decency, to which he would rise if it were possible; a limit of shame below which, if it be possible, he will not stoop. The design in most men is one of conformity; here and there, in picked natures, it transcends itself and soars on the other side, arming martyrs with independence; but in all, in their degrees, it is a bosom thought: — not in man alone, for we trace it in dogs and cats whom we know fairly well, and doubtless some similar point of honor sways the elephant, the oyster, and the louse, of whom we know so little: — but in man, at least, it sways with so complete an empire that merely selfish things come second, even with the selfish; that appetites are starved, fears are conquered, pains supported; that almost the dullest shrinks from the reproof of a glance, although it were a child's; and all but the most cowardly stand amid the risks of war; and the more noble, having strongly conceived an act as due to their ideal, affront and embrace death. Strange enough if, with their singular origin and perverted practice, they think they are to be rewarded in some

future life; stranger still, if they are persuaded of the contrary, and think this blow which they solicit will strike them senseless for eternity. I shall be reminded what a tragedy of misconception and misconduct man at large presents — of organized injustice, cowardly violence, and treacherous crime, and of the damning imperfections of the best. They cannot be too darkly drawn. Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how tenfold more remarkable that all should continue to strive; and surely we should find it both touching and inspiring, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labor.

If the first view of this creature, stalking in his rotatory isle, be a thing to shake the courage of the stoutest, on this nearer sight he startles us with an admiring wonder. It matters not where we look, under what climate we observe him, in what state of society, in what depth of ignorance, burthened with what erroneous morality; by camp-fires in Assiniboia, the snow powdering his shoulders, the wind plucking his blanket, as he sits, passing the ceremonial calumet and uttering his grave opinions like a Roman senator; in ships at sea, a man inured to hardship and vile pleasures, his brightest hope a fiddle in a tavern and a bedizened trull who sells herself to rob him, and he for all that simple, innocent, cheerful, kindly like a child, constant to toil, brave to drown, for others; in the slums of cities, moving among indifferent millions to mechanical employments, without hope of change in the future, with scarce a pleasure in the present, and yet true to his virtues, honest up to his lights, kind to his neighbors, tempted perhaps in vain by the bright gin-palace, perhaps long suffering with the drunken wife that ruins him; in India (a woman this time) kneeling with broken cries and streaming tears, as she drowns her child in the sacred river; in the brothel, the discard of society, living mainly on strong drink, fed with affronts, a fool, a thief, the comrade of thieves, and even here keeping the point of honor and the touch of pity, often repaying the world's scorn with service, often standing firm upon a scruple, and at a certain cost rejecting riches: — everywhere some virtue cherished or affected, everywhere some decency of thought and carriage, everywhere the ensign of man's ineffectual goodness: — ah! if I could show you this! If I could show you these men and

women, all the world over, in every stage of history, under every abuse of error, under every circumstance of failure, without hope, without help, without thanks, still obscurely fighting the lost fight of virtue, still clinging, in the brothel or on the scaffold, to some rag of honor, the poor jewel of their souls! They may seek to escape, and yet they cannot; it is not alone their privilege and glory, but their doom; they are condemned to some nobility, all their lives long, the desire of good is at their heels, the implacable hunter.

Of all earth's meteors, here at least is the most strange and consoling: that this ennobled lemur, this hair-crowned bubble of the dust, this inheritor of a few years and sorrows, should yet deny himself his rare delights, and add to his frequent pains, and live for an ideal, however misconceived. Nor can we stop with man. He stands no longer like a thing apart. Close at his heels we see the dog, prince of another genus; and in him too we see dumbly testified the same cultus of an unattainable ideal, the same constancy in failure. Does it stop with the dog? We look at our feet where the ground is blackened with the swarming ant; a creature so small, so far from us in the hierarchy of brutes, that we can scarce trace and scarce comprehend his doings; and here also, in his ordered polities and rigorous justice, we see confessed the law of duty and the fact of individual sin. Does it stop, then, with the ant? Rather this desire of well-doing and this doom of frailty run through all the grades of life: rather is this earth, from the frosty top of Everest to the next margin of the internal fire, one stage of ineffectual virtues and one temple of pious tears and perseverance. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together. It is the common and the god-like law of life. The browsers, the biters, the barkers, the hairy coats of field and forest, the squirrel in the oak, the thousand-footed creeper in the dust, as they share with us the gift of life, share with us the love of an ideal; strive like us — like us are tempted to grow weary of the struggle — to do well; like us receive at times unmerited refreshment, visitings of support, returns of courage; and are condemned like us to be crucified between that double law of the members and the will. Are they like us, I wonder, in the timid hope of some reward, some sugar with the drug? do they, too, stand aghast at unrewarded virtues, at the sufferings of those whom, in our partiality, we take to be just, and the prosperity of such as in

our blindness we call wicked? It may be, and yet God knows what they should look for. Even while they look, even while they repent, the foot of man treads them by thousands in the dust, the yelping hounds burst upon their trail, the bullet speeds, the knives are heating in the den of the vivisectionist; or the dew falls, and the generation of a day is blotted out. For these are creatures compared with whom our weakness is strength, our ignorance wisdom, our brief span eternity.

And as we dwell, we living things, in our Isle of terror and under the imminent hand of death, God forbid it should be man the erected, the reasoner, the wise in his own eyes — God forbid it should be man that wearies in well-doing, that despairs of unrewarded effort, or utters the language of complaint. Let it be enough for faith, that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy: surely not all in vain.

A CHRISTMAS SERMON

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for December, 1888. As a statement of philosophy of life, it may be taken as in the highest sense autobiographical.

By the time this paper appears, I shall have been talking for twelve months; and it is thought I should take my leave in a formal and seasonable manner. Valedictory eloquence is rare, and death-bed sayings have not often hit the mark of the occasion. Charles Second, wit and skeptic, a man whose life had been one long lesson in human incredulity, an easy-going comrade, a maneuvering king — remembered and embodied all his wit and skepticism along with more than his usual good-humor in the famous "I am afraid, gentlemen, I am an unconscionable time a-dying."

I

An unconscionable time a-dying — there is the picture ("I am afraid, gentlemen,") of your life and of mine. The sands run out, and the hours are "numbered and imputed," and the days go by; and when the last of these finds us, we have been a long time dying, and what else? The very length is something, if we reach that hour of separation undishonored; and to have lived at all is

doubtless (in the soldierly expression) to have served. There is a tale in Tacitus of how the veterans mutinied in the German wilderness; of how they mobbed Germanicus, clamoring to go home; and of how, seizing their general's hand, these old war-worn exiles passed his finger along their toothless gums. *Sunt lacrymæ rerum:*¹ this was the most eloquent of the songs of Simeon. And when a man has lived to a fair age, he bears his marks of service. He may have never been remarked upon the breach at the head of the army; at least he shall have lost his teeth on the camp bread.

The idealism of serious people in this age of ours is of a noble character. It never seems to them that they have served enough; they have a fine impatience of their virtues. It were perhaps more modest to be singly thankful that we are no worse. It is not only our enemies, those separate characters — it is we ourselves who know not what we do; — thence springs the glimmering hope that perhaps we do better than we think: that to scramble through this random business with hands reasonably clean, to have played the part of a man or woman with some reasonable fulness, to have often resisted the diabolic, and at the end to be still resisting it, is for the poor human soldier to have done right well. To ask to see some fruit of our endeavor is but a transcendental way of serving for reward; and what we take to be contempt of self is only greed of hire.

And again if we require so much of ourselves, shall we not require much of others? If we do not genially judge our own deficiencies, is it not to be feared we shall be even stern to the trespasses of others? And he who (looking back upon his own life) can see no more than that he has been unconscionably long a-dying, will he not be tempted to think his neighbor unconscionably long of getting hanged? It is probable that nearly all who think of conduct at all, think of it too much; it is certain we all think too much of sin. We are not damned for doing wrong, but for not doing right; Christ would never hear of negative morality; *thou shalt* was ever his word, with which he superseded *thou shalt not*. To make our idea of morality centre on forbidden acts is, to defile the imagination and to introduce into our judgments of our fellow-men a secret element of gusto. If a thing is wrong for us, we should not dwell upon the thought of it; or we shall soon dwell upon it with inverted pleasure.

x Our history has its tragedies (literally, tears).

If we cannot drive it from our minds — one thing of two: either our creed is in the wrong and we must more indulgently remodel it; or else, if our morality be in the right, we are criminal lunatics and should place our persons in restraint. A mark of such unwholesomely divided minds is the passion for interference with others: the Fox without the Tail was of this breed, but had (if his biographer is to be trusted) a certain antique civility now out of date. A man may have a flaw, a weakness, that unfits him for the duties of life, that spoils his temper, that threatens his integrity, or that betrays him into cruelty. It has to be conquered; but it must never be suffered to engross his thoughts. The true duties lie all upon the farther side, and must be attended to with a whole mind so soon as this preliminary clearing of the decks has been effected. In order that he may be kind and honest, it may be needful he should become a total abstainer; let him become so then, and the next day let him forget the circumstance. Trying to be kind and honest will require all his thoughts; a mortified appetite is never a wise companion; in so far as he has had to mortify an appetite, he will still be the worse man; and of such an one a great deal of cheerfulness will be required in judging life, and a great deal of humility in judging others.

It may be argued again that dissatisfaction with our life's endeavor springs in some degree from dulness. We require higher tasks, because we do not recognize the height of those we have. Trying to be kind and honest seems an affair too simple and too inconsequential for gentlemen of our heroic mold; we had rather set ourselves to something bold, arduous, and conclusive; we had rather found a schism or suppress a heresy, cut off a hand or mortify an appetite. But the task before us, which is to co-endure with our existence, is rather one of microscopic fineness, and the heroism required is that of patience. There is no cutting of the Gordian knots of life; each must be smilingly unravelled.

To be honest, to be kind — to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation — above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself — here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy. He has an ambitious soul who would ask more; he has a

hopeful spirit who should look in such an enterprise to be successful. There is indeed one element in human destiny that not blindness itself can controvert: whatever else we are intended to do, we are not intended to succeed; failure is the fate allotted. It is so in every art and study; it is so above all in the continent art of living well. Here is a pleasant thought for the year's end or for the end of life: Only self-deception will be satisfied, and there need be no despair for the despairer.

2

But Christmas is not only the mile-mark of another year, moving us to thoughts of self-examination: it is a season, from all its associations, whether domestic or religious, suggesting thoughts of joy. A man dissatisfied with his endeavors is a man tempted to sadness. And in the midst of the winter, when his life runs lowest and he is reminded of the empty chairs of his beloved, it is well he should be condemned to this fashion of the smiling face. Noble disappointment, noble self-denial are not to be admired, not even to be pardoned, if they bring bitterness. It is one thing to enter the kingdom of heaven maim; another to maim yourself and stay without. And the kingdom of heaven is of the childlike, of those who are easy to please, who love and who give pleasure. Mighty men of their hands, the smiters and the builders and the judges, have lived long and done sternly and yet preserved this lovely character; and among our carpet interests and twopenny concerns, the shame were indelible if we should lose it. Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties. And it is the trouble with moral men that they have neither one nor other. It was the moral man, the Pharisee, whom Christ could not away with. If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong. I do not say "give them up," for they may be all you have; but conceal them like a vice, lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people.

A strange temptation attends upon man: to keep his eye on pleasures, even when he will not share in them; to aim all his morals against them. This very year, a lady (singular iconoclast!) proclaimed a crusade against dolls; and the racy sermon against lust is a feature of the age. I venture to call such moralists insincere. At any excess or perversion of a natural appetite, their lyre

sounds of itself with relishing denunciations; but for all displays of the truly diabolic — envy, malice, the mean lie, the mean silence, the calumnious truth, the backbiter, the petty tyrant, the peevish poisoner of family life — their standard is quite different. These are wrong, they will admit, yet somehow not so wrong; there is no zeal in their assault on them, no secret element of gusto warms up the sermon; it is for things not wrong in themselves that they reserve the choicest of their indignation. A man may naturally disclaim all moral kinship with the Reverend Mr. Zola or the hobgoblin old lady of the dolls; for these are gross and naked instances. And yet in each of us some similar element resides. The sight of a pleasure in which we cannot or else will not share moves us to a particular impatience. It may be because we are envious, or because we are sad, or because we dislike noise and romping — being so refined, or because — being so philosophic — we have an overwhelming sense of life's gravity: at least, as we go on in years, we are all tempted to frown upon our neighbor's pleasures. People are nowadays so fond of resisting temptations; here is one to be resisted. They are fond of self-denial; here is a propensity that cannot be too peremptorily denied. There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbors good. One person I have to make good: myself. But my duty to my neighbor is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy — if I may.

3

Happiness and goodness, according to canting moralists, stand in the relation of effect and cause. There was never anything less proved or less probable: our happiness is never in our own hands; we inherit our constitution; we stand buffet among friends and enemies; we may be so built as to feel a sneer or an aspersion with unusual keenness, and so circumstanced as to be unusually exposed to them; we may have nerves very sensitive to pain, and be afflicted with a disease very painful. Virtue will not help us, and it is not meant to help us. It is not even its own reward, except for the self-centred and — I had almost said — the unamiable. No man can pacify his conscience; if quiet be what he want, he shall do better to let that organ perish from disuse. And to avoid the penalties of the law, and the minor *capitis diminutio* of

1 loss of prestige.

social ostracism, is an affair of wisdom — of cunning, if you will — and not of virtue.

In his own life, then, a man is not to expect happiness, only to profit by it gladly when it shall arise; he is on duty here; he knows not how or why, and does not need to know; he knows not for what hire, and must not ask. Somehow or other, though he does not know what goodness is, he must try to be good; somehow or other, though he cannot tell what will do it, he must try to give happiness to others. And no doubt there comes in here a frequent clash of duties. How far is he to make his neighbor happy? How far must he respect that smiling face, so easy to cloud, so hard to brighten again? And how far, on the other side, is he bound to be his brother's keeper and the prophet of his own morality? How far must he resent evil?

The difficulty is that we have little guidance; Christ's sayings on the point being hard to reconcile with each other, and (the most of them) hard to accept. But the truth of his teaching would seem to be this: in our own person and fortune, we should be ready to accept and to pardon all; it is *our* cheek we are to turn, *our* coat that we are to give away to the man who has taken *our* cloak. But when another's face is buffeted, perhaps a little of the lion will become us best. That we are to suffer others to be injured, and stand by, is not conceivable and surely not desirable. Revenge, says Bacon, is a kind of wild justice; its judgments at least are delivered by an insane judge; and in our own quarrel we can see nothing truly and do nothing wisely. But in the quarrel of our neighbor, let us be more bold. One person's happiness is as sacred as another's; when we cannot defend both, let us defend one with a stout heart. It is only in so far as we are doing this, that we have any right to interfere: the defence of B is our only ground of action against A. A has as good a right to go to the devil, as we to go to glory; and neither knows what he does.

The truth is that all these interventions and denunciations and militant mongerings of moral half-truths, though they be sometimes needful, though they are often enjoyable, do yet belong to an inferior grade of duties. Ill-temper and envy and revenge find here an arsenal of pious disguises; this is the playground of inverted lusts. With a little more patience and a little less temper, a gentler and wiser method might be found in almost every case; and the knot that we cut by some fine heady quarrel-scene in private

life, or, in public affairs, by some denunciatory act against what we are pleased to call our neighbor's vices, might yet have been unweaved by the hand of sympathy.

4

To look back upon the past year, and see how little we have striven and to what small purpose; and how often we have been cowardly and hung back, or temerarious and rushed unwisely in; and how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness: — it may seem a paradox, but in the bitterness of these discoveries, a certain consolation resides. Life is not designed to minister to a man's vanity. He goes upon his long business most of the time with a hanging head, and all the time like a blind child. Full of rewards and pleasures as it is — so that to see the day break or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner-call when he is hungry, fills him with surprising joys — this world is yet for him no abiding city. Friendships fall through; health fails, weariness assails him; year after year, he must thumb the hardly varying record of his own weakness and folly. It is a friendly process of detachment. When the time comes that he should go, there need be few illusions left about himself. *Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much:* — surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed. Nor will he complain at the summons which calls a defeated soldier from the field: defeated, ay, if he were Paul or Marcus Aurelius! — but if there is still one inch of fight in his old spirit, undishonored. The faith which sustained him in his life-long blindness and life-long disappointment will scarce even be required in this last formality of laying down his arms. Give him a march with his old bones; there, out of the glorious sun-colored earth, out of the day and the dust and the ecstasy — there goes another Faithful Failure!

From a recent book of verse, where there is more than one such beautiful and manly poem, I take this memorial piece: it says better than I can, what I love to think; let it be our parting word:

"A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

"The smoke ascends
 In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
 Shine, and are changed. In the valley
 Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
 Closing his benediction,
 Sinks, and the darkening air
 Thrills with a sense of the triumphant night —
 Night, with her train of stars
 And her great gift of sleep.

"So be my passing!
 My task accomplished and the long day done,
 My wages taken, and in my heart
 Some late lark singing,
 Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
 The sundown splendid and serene,
 Death." ⁵

¹ From *A Book of Verses*, by William Ernest Henley,
 D. Nutt, 1888. (Stevenson's note.)

JAMES THOMSON (1834-1882)

Thomson was at different times army-schoolmaster, general agent in Colorado for a mine, correspondent in Spain for the *New York World*, and contributor to various magazines. He is generally known by the initials 'B. V.' which stand for Bysshe, Shelley's name, and Vanolis, an anagram of Novalis, the pen name of the German romanticist von Hardenberg.

The epithet "pessimistic" is regularly attached to the writings of James Thomson. His best poems, the product of a life harassed by poverty and disease, are assuredly despairing in subject-matter, but illuminated by the imagination of a genius. He has, however, written delightful poems in a lighter vein, and some discriminating literary studies in prose.

Selections from Thomson have been made and excellently edited by G. T. Gerould (Holt). The standard biography is by H. S. Salt.

MATER TENEBRARUM ¹

In the endless nights, from my bed, where
 sleepless in anguish I lie,
 I startle the stillness and gloom with a bitter
 and strong cry:

O Love! O Beloved long lost! come down
 from thy Heaven above,

For my heart is wasting and dying in utter-
 most famine for love!

Come down for a moment! oh, come! Come
 serious and mild ⁵

And pale, as thou wert on this earth, thou
 adorable Child!

Or come as thou art, with thy sanctitude,
 triumph and bliss,

For a garment of glory about thee; and give
 me one kiss,

One tender and pitying look of thy tenderest
 eyes,

One word of solemn assurance and truth
 that the soul with its love never
 dies! ¹⁰

In the endless nights, from my bed, where
 sleepless in frenzy I lie,

I cleave through the crushing gloom with a
 bitter and deadly cry:

Oh! where have they taken my Love from
 our Eden of bliss on this earth,

Which now is a frozen waste of sepulchral
 and horrible dearth?

Have they killed her indeed? Is her soul as
 her body, which long ¹⁵

Has moldered away in the dust where the
 foul worms throng?

O'er what abhorrent Lethes, to what remot-
 est star,

Is she rapt away from my pursuit through
 cycles and systems far?

She is dead, she is utterly dead; for her life
 would hear and speed

To the wild imploring cry of my heart that
 cries in its dreadful need. ²⁰

In the endless nights, on my bed, where
 sleeplessly brooding I lie,

I burden the heavy gloom with a bitter and
 weary sigh:

No hope in this worn-out world, no hope be-
 yond the tomb;

No living and loving God, but blind and
 stony Doom.

Anguish and grief and sin, terror, disease, and
 despair! ²⁵

Why throw not off this life, this garment of
 torture I wear,

And go down to sleep in the grave in ever-
 lasting rest?

What keeps me yet in this life, what spark in
 my frozen breast?

A fire of dread, a light of hope, kindled, O
 Love, by thee;

For thy pure and gentle and beautiful soul, it
 must immortal be. ³⁰

¹ Mother of darkness.

From SUNDAY AT HAMPSTEAD

I

This is the Heath of Hampstead,¹
 There is the dome of Saint Paul's;
 Beneath, on the serried house-tops,
 A chequered lustre falls:

And the mighty city of London,
 Under the clouds and the light,
 Seems a low wet beach, half shingle,²
 With a few sharp rocks upright.

Here will we sit, my darling,
 And dream an hour away:
 The donkeys are hurried and worried,
 But we are not donkeys today:

Through all the weary week, dear,
 We toil in the murk down there,
 Tied to a desk and a counter,
 A patient stupid pair!

But on Sunday we slip our tether,
 And away from the smoke and the smirch;
 Too grateful to God for His Sabbath
 To shut its hours in a church.

Away to the green, green country,
 Under the open sky;
 Where the earth's sweet breath is incense
 And the lark sings psalms on high.

On Sunday we're Lord and Lady,
 With ten times the love and glee
 Of those pale and languid rich ones
 Who are always and never free.

They drawl and stare and simper,
 So fine and cold and staid,
 Like exquisite waxwork figures
 That must be kept in the shade:

We can laugh out loud when merry,
 We can romp at kiss-in-the-ring,
 We can take our beer at a public,
 We can loll on the grass and sing. . .

Would you grieve very much, my darling,
 If all yon low wet shore
 Were drowned by a mighty flood-tide,
 And we never toiled there more?

Wicked? — There is no sin, dear,
 In an idle dreamer's head;

¹ Hampstead Heath, on the edge of London and part of the city, is a favorite playground of the working people of London, especially on bank holidays.
² coarse gravel.

He turns the world topsy-turvy
 To prove that his soul's not dead.

I am sinking, sinking, sinking;
 It is hard to sit upright!
 Your lap is the softest pillow!
 Good night, my love, good night!

1863-65.

From THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT

4

He stood alone within the spacious square
 Declaiming from the central grassy mound,
 With head uncovered and with streaming
 hair,

As if large multitudes were gathered round:
 A stalwart shape, the gestures full of might,
 The glances burning with unnatural
 light: —

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: All was black,
 In heaven no single star, on earth no track;
 A brooding hush without a stir or note,
 The air so thick it clotted in my throat;
 And thus for hours; then some enormous
 things

Swooped past with savage cries and clanking
 wings:

But I strode on austere;
 No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: Eyes of fire
 Glared at me throbbing with a starved desire;
 The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous
 breath

Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death;
 Sharp claws, swift talons, fleshless fingers
 cold

Plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold:
 But I strode on austere;
 No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: Lo you, there,
 That hillock burning with a brazen glare;
 Those myriad dusky flames with points
 a-glow

Which writhed and hissed and darted to and
 fro;

A Sabbath of the Serpents, heaped pell-
 mell

For Devil's roll-call and some fête of Hell:

Yet I strode on austere;
 No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: Meteors
 ran 35
 And crossed their javelins on the black sky-
 span;
 The zenith opened to a gulf of flame,
 The dreadful thunderbolts jarred earth's
 fixed frame;
 The ground all heaved in waves of fire that
 surged
 And weltered round me sole there unsub-
 merged: 40
 Yet I strode on austere;
 No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: Air once
 more,
 And I was close upon a wild sea-shore; 45
 Enormous cliffs arose on either hand,
 The deep tide thundered up a league-broad
 strand;
 White foambelts seethed there, wan spray
 swept and flew;
 The sky broke, moon and stars and clouds
 and blue:
 And I strode on austere; 50
 No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: On the left,
 The sun arose and crowned a broad crag-
 cleft;
 There stopped and burned out black, except
 a rim, 55
 A bleeding eyeless socket, red and dim;
 Whereon the moon fell suddenly south-
 west,
 And stood above the right-hand cliffs at
 rest:
 Still I strode on austere;
 No hope could have no fear. 60

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: From the
 right
 A shape came slowly with a ruddy light;
 A woman with a red lamp in her hand,
 Bareheaded and barefooted on that strand;
 O desolation moving with such grace! 66
 O anguish with such beauty in thy face!
 I fell as on my bier,
 Hope travailed with such fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was, 70
 As I came through the desert: I was twain,
 Two selves distinct that cannot join again;
 One stood apart and knew but could not stir,
 And watched the other stark in swoon and
 her;
 And she came on, and never turned aside, 75
 Between such sun and moon and roaring
 tide:
 And as she came more near
 My soul grew mad with fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: Hell is mild 80
 And piteous matched with that accursed
 wild;
 A large black sign was on her breast that
 bowed,
 A broad black band ran down her snow-white
 shroud;
 That lamp she held was her own burning
 heart,
 Whose blood-drips trickled step by step
 apart: 85
 The mystery was clear:
 Mad rage had swallowed fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: By the sea
 She knelt and bent above that senseless me;
 Those lamp-drops fell upon my white brow
 there, 91
 She tried to cleanse them with her tears and
 hair;
 She murmured words of pity, love, and woe,
 She heeded not the level rushing flow:
 And mad with rage and fear, 95
 I stood stonebound so near.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
 As I came through the desert: When the tide
 Swept up to her there kneeling by my side,
 She clasped that corpse-like me, and they
 were borne 100
 Away, and this vile me was left forlorn;
 I know the whole sea cannot quench that
 heart,
 Or cleanse that brow, or wash those two
 apart:
 They love; their doom is drear,
 Yet they nor hope nor fear; 105
 But I, what do I here?

FRANCIS THOMPSON (1860-1907)

Francis Thompson is the great Roman Catholic poet of the nineteenth century. He was educated at Ushaw College, a Catholic college near Durham, and later studied medicine at Owens College, Manchester. He never practiced, however. During a life made painful by disease and personal sorrows, he was befriended and encouraged by Wilfred and Alice Meynell, who, after his death, edited his poems.

Thompson is usually regarded as a literary descendant of the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, especially Crashaw. This is only partly true. In his religious mysticism, his delight in conceits and in strange words, many of which he coined himself, he does resemble them; but he has an originality all his own. His literary idol was Shelley, about whom he wrote a now-famous essay. Besides his poems, he has written critical and familiar essays, which for freshness and charm rank among the best of the century.

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;

I fled Him down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways

Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.

Up vistaed hopes I sped; 6

And shot, precipitated,

Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed,
followed after.

But with unhurrying chase, 10

And unperturbèd pace,

Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,

They beat — and a Voice beat

More instant than the Feet —

“All things betray thee, who betrayest
Me.” 15

I pleaded, outlaw-wise,

By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;

(For, though I knew His love Who followèd,
Yet was I sore adread 20

Lest, having Him, I must have naught be-
side);

But, if one little casement parted wide,

The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to
pursue.

Across the margent of the world I fled, 25

And troubled the gold gateways of the
stars,

Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;

Fretted to dulcet jars

And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the
moon.

I said to dawn, Be sudden; to eve, Be soon; 30
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me
over

From this tremendous Lover!

Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!

I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy, 35

In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal
deceit.

To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every
wind.

But whether they swept, smoothly
fleet, 40

The long savannahs of the blue;

Or whether, Thunder-driven,

They clangèd his chariot 'thwart a
heaven

Plashy with flying lightnings round the
spurn o' their feet: —

Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to
pursue. 45

Still with unhurrying chase,

And unperturbèd pace,

Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,

Came on the following Feet,

And a Voice above their beat — 50

“Naught shelters thee, who wilt not
shelter Me.”

I sought no more that after which I strayed

In face of man or maid;

But still within the little children's eyes

Seems something, something that
replies; 55

They at least are for me, surely for me!

I turned me to them very wistfully;

But, just as their young eyes grew sudden
fair

With dawning answers there,

Their angel plucked them from me by the
hair. 60

“Come then, ye other children, Nature's —
share

With me” (said I) “your delicate fellowship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,

Let me twine with you caresses,
 Wantoning 65
 With our Lady-Mother's vagrant
 tresses,
 Banqueting
 With her in her wind-walled palace,
 Underneath her azured dais,
 Quaffing, as your taintless way is, 70
 From a chalice
 Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."
 So it was done:
I in their delicate fellowship was one —
 Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies. 75
I knew all the swift importings
 On the wilful face of skies;
 I knew how the clouds arise
 Spumèd of the wild sea-snortings;
 All that's born or dies 80
 Rose and drooped with — made them
 shapers
 Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine —
 With them joyed and was bereaven.
 I was heavy with the even,
 When she lit her glimmering tapers 85
 Round the day's dead sanctities.
 I laughed in the morning's eyes.
I triumphed and *I* saddened with all weather,
 Heaven and *I* wept together,
 And its sweet tears were salt with mortal
 mine; 90
 Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
 I laid my own to beat,
 And share commingling heat; ,
 But not by that, by that, was eased my
 human smart.
 In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's grey
 cheek. 95
 For ah! we know not what each other
 says,
 These things and *I*; in sound *I*
 speak—
Their sound is but their stir, they speak by
 silences.
 Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my
 drouth;
 Let her, if she would owe me, 100
 Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show
 me
 The breasts o' her tenderness:
 Never did any milk of hers once bless
 My thirsting mouth.
 Nigh and nigh draws the chase, 105
 With unperturbèd pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
 And past those noisèd Feet
 A voice comes yet more fleet —
 "Lo! naught contents thee, who con-
 tent'st not Me." 110

Naked *I* wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
 My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn
 from me,
 And smitten me to my knee;
 I am defenceless utterly.
 I slept, methinks, and woke, 115
 And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.
 In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
 I shook the pillaring hours
 And pulled my life upon me; grimed with
 smears,
 I stand amid the dust o' the mounded
 years — 120
 My mangled youth lies dead beneath the
 heap
 My days have crackled and gone up in
 smoke,
 Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a
 stream.
 Yea, faileth now even dream
 The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist; 125
 Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy
 twist
 I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
 Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
 For earth with heavy griefs so overplussed.
 Ah! is Thy love indeed 130
 A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
 Suffering no flowers except its own to mount?
 Ah! must —
 Designer infinite! —
 Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou
 canst limn with it? 135
 My freshness spent its wavering shower i'
 the dust;
 And now my heart is as a broken fount,
 Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down
 ever
 From the dank thoughts that shiver
 Upon the sighful branches of my mind. 140
 Such is; what is to be?
 The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?
 I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds;
 Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
 From the hid battlements of Eternity; 145
 Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
 Round the half-glimpsèd turrets slowly wash
 again.
 But not ere him who summoneth
 I first have seen, enwound
 With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-
 crowned; 150
 His name *I* know, and what his trumpet
 saith.
 Whether man's heart or life it be which
 yields
 Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields
 Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit 155
 Comes on at hand the bruit;
 That Voice is round me like a bursting
 sea:
 "And is thy earth so marred,
 Shattered in shard on shard?
 Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest
 Me! 160
 Strange, piteous, futile thing,
 Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
 Seeing none but I makes much of naught"
 (He said),
 "And human love needs human meriting:
 How hast thou merited — 165
 Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
 Alack, thou knowest not
 How little worthy of any love thou art!
 Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
 Save Me, save only Me? 170
 All which I took from thee I did but take,
 Not for thy harms,
 But just that thou might'st seek it in My
 arms.
 All which thy child's mistake
 Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at
 home:
 Rise, clasp My hand, and come!" 175
 Halts by me that footfall:
 Is my gloom, after all,
 Shade of His hand, outstretched
 caressingly?

"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest, 180
 I am He Whom thou seekest!
 Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest
 Me."

ENVOY

Go, songs, for ended is our brief, sweet
 play;
 Go, children of swift joy and tardy sor-
 row:
 And some are sung, and that was yester-
 day,
 And some unsung, and that may be to-
 morrow.
 Go forth; and if it be o'er stony way, 5
 Old joy can lend what newer grief must
 borrow:
 And it was sweet, and that was yesterday,
 And sweet is sweet, though purchased with
 sorrow.
 Go, songs, and come not back from your far
 way;
 And if men ask you why ye smile and
 sorrow, 10
 Tell them ye grieve, for your hearts know
 To-day,
 Tell them ye smile, for your eyes know
 To-morrow.

GEORGE MEREDITH (1828-1909)

George Meredith was born in Portsmouth, February 12, 1828. He was educated at Neuwied, on the Rhine. On his return to England he was articled as clerk to a solicitor, but his passion was for literature. He lived for a while by journalism, and later for many years acted as reader of manuscripts for a London publisher. He began his literary career with a volume of poetry in 1851. His first marriage was unhappy and ended in separation, and the suicide of his wife — a situation which suggests the subject of his longest poem, a sequence of poems of sixteen lines called *Modern Love* published in 1862. Meanwhile Meredith, while not abandoning poetry, had begun to produce that remarkable series of novels which are among the chief glories of English fiction, some of them being *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859), *Evan Harrington* (1861), *Beauchamp's Career* (1875), *The Egoist* (1879), *Diana of the Crossways* (1885). He died in 1909.

Meredith's prose is marked by certain eccentricities of style which make his novels difficult reading. Still more is this true of his poetry. The extreme concentration, rapid changes of subject, and unusual use of words call for the closest attention. But both Meredith's novels and poetry repay this effort. Meredith is one of the writers who have given to the chief intellectual concept of the age, the theory of evolution, a genuine imaginative treatment. Meredith's philosophy is one of optimism. He sees the long evolution of physical life continuing into higher forms of intellectual life. To this result the work of Nature is directed and to it hardship and trial constitute a discipline. He is like Browning, both in his difficulty of style and in the energy and hopefulness of his message. Added to this, Meredith had a sense of the communion between man and his mother Nature and likewise a perception of the external phenomena of Nature which puts him among the greatest of Nature poets.

The complete works of George Meredith are published by Charles Scribner's Sons, through whose kind permission the following poems are reprinted.

MODERN LOVE

The fifty poems that make up *Modern Love* are regarded by some critics as a sonnet-sequence. Note, however, that the poems have sixteen lines (a length not unusual in the early history of the sonnet), and that, unlike most sonnet-sequences, they tell a connected, complex story.

I

By this he knew she wept with waking eyes:
That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,
The strange low sobs that shook their common bed,

Were called into her with a sharp surprise,
And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,
Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay
Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed
away

With muffled pulses. Then, as midnight makes

Her giant heart of Memory and Tears
Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat
Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet

Were moveless, looking through their dead black years,

By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen
Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword between;

Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

2

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.

But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had!
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:

A languid humor stole among the hours,
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,
And raged deep inward, till the light was brown

Before his vision, and the world forgot,
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown
The pit of infamy: and then again
He fainted on his vengefulness, and strove
To ape the magnanimity of love,
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.

48

Their sense is with their senses all mixed in,
Destroyed by subtleties these women are!
More brain, O Lord, more brain! or we shall mar

Utterly this fair garden we might win.

Behold! I looked for peace, and thought it near.

Our inmost hearts had opened, each to each.
We drank the pure daylight of honest speech.
Alas! that was the fatal draught, I fear.

For when of my lost Lady¹ came the word,
This woman, O this agony of flesh!

Jealous devotion bade her break the mesh,
That I might seek that other like a bird.

I do adore the nobleness! despise

The act! She has gone forth, I know not where.

Will the hard world my sentence of her share?

I feel the truth; so let the world surmise.

49

He² found her³ by the ocean's moaning verge,

Nor any wicked change in her discerned;
And she believed his old love had returned,
Which was her exultation, and her scourge.
She took his hand, and walked with him, and seemed

The wife he sought, though shadow-like and dry.

She had one terror, lest her heart should sigh,

And tell her loudly she no longer dreamed.
She dared not say, "This is my breast: look in."

But there's a strength to help the desperate weak.

That night he learned how silence best can speak

The awful things when Pity pleads for Sin.
About the middle of the night her call

Was heard, and he came wondering to the bed.

"Now kiss me, dear! it may be, now!" she said.

Lethe had passed those lips,⁴ and he knew all.

50

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
The union of this ever-diverse pair!

These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.

Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:

But they fed not on the advancing hours:
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.

¹ The woman with whom the husband has been carrying on a flirtation.

² The husband.

³ The wife.

⁴ i.e., she had killed herself.

Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless
dole.

Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life! —
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's
force,
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior
horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the
shore!

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT

On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the
fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
Where sinners hugged their spectre of re-
pose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he leaned,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands ca-
reened,
Now the black planet shadowed Arctic
snows.
Soaring through wider zones that pricked
his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reached a middle height, and at the
stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he looked, and
sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on
rank,
The army of unalterable law.

A CERTAIN PEOPLE

As Puritans they prominently wax,
And none more kindly gives and takes hard
knocks.
Strong psalmic chanting, like to nasal cocks,
They join to thunderings of their hearty
thwacks.
But naughtiness, with hoggerly, not lacks
When Peace another door in them unlocks,
Where conscience shows the eyeing of an ox
Grown dully apprehensive of an Axe.
Graceless they are when gone to frivolous-
ness,
Fearing the God they flout, the God they
glut.
They need their pious exercises less
Than schooling in the Pleasures: fair belief
That these are devilish only to their thief,
Charged with an Axe nigh on the occiput.

A STAVE OF ROVING TIM

The wind is East, the wind is West,
Blows in and out of haven;
The wind that blows is the wind that's best,
And croak, my jolly raven!
If here awhile we jigged and laughed, 5
The like we will do yonder;
For he's the man who masters a craft,
And light as a lord can wander.
So, foot the measure, Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven! 10
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

You live in rows of snug abodes,
With gold, maybe, for counting;
And mine's the beck of the rainy roads 15
Against the sun a-mounting.
I take the day as it behaves,
Nor shiver when 'tis airy;
But comes a breeze, all you are on waves,
Sick chickens o' Mother Carey! 20
So, now for next, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

Sweet lass, you screw a lovely leer, 25
To make a man consider.
If you were up with the auctioneer,
I'd be a handsome bidder.
But wedlock clips the rover's wing;
She tricks him fly to spider; 30
And when we get to fights in the Ring,
It's trumps when you play outsider.
So, wrench and split, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim 35
Is in and out of haven.

Along my winding way I know
A shady dell that's winking;
The very corner for Self and Co
To do a world of thinking. 40
And shall I this? and shall I that?
Till Nature answers, n'ether!
Strike match and light your pipe in your hat,
Rejoicing in sound shoe-leather!
So, lead along, cries Roving Tim, 45
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

A cunning hand 'll hand you bread,
With freedom for your capers. 50
I'm not so sure of a cunning head;
It steers to pits or vapors.

But as for Life, we'll hear in sight
 The lesson Nature teaches;
 Regard it in a sailing light,
 And treat it like thirsty leeches.
 So fly your jib, cries Roving Tim,
 And top your boom, old raven!
 The wind according to its whim
 Is in and out of haven.

She'll take, to please her dame and dad,
 The shopman nicely shaven.
 She'll learn to think o' the marching lad
 When perchers show they're craven.
 You say the shopman piles a heap,
 While I perhaps am fasting;
 And bless your wits, it haunts him in sleep,
 His tin-kettle chance of lasting!
 So hail the road, cried Roving Tim,
 And hail the rain, old raven!
 The wind according to its whim
 Is in and out of haven.

He's half a wife, yon pecker bill;
 A book and likewise preacher.
 With any soul, in a game of skill,
 He'll prove your over-reacher.
 The reason is, his brains are bent
 On doing things right single.
 You'd wish for them when pitching your tent
 At night in a whirly dingle!
 So, off we go, cries Roving Tim,
 And on we go, old raven!
 The wind according to its whim
 Is in and out of haven.

Lord, no, man's lot is not for bliss;
 To call it woe is blindness:
 It's here a kick, and it's there a kiss,
 And here and there a kindness.
 He starts a hare and calls her joy;
 He runs her down to sorrow:
 The dogs within him bother the boy,
 But 'tis a new day to-morrow.
 So, I at helm, cries Roving Tim,
 And you at bow, old raven!
 The wind according to its whim
 Is in and out of haven.

HARD WEATHER

Bursts from a rending East in flaws
 The young green leaflet's harrier, sworn
 To strew the garden, strip the shaws,¹
 And show our Spring with banner torn.
 Was ever such virago morn?
 The wind has teeth, the wind has claws.

¹ The tops of potatoes and similar tubers or roots.

All the wind's wolves through woods are
 loose
 The wild wind's falconry aloft.
 Shrill underfoot the grassblade shrews,
 At gallop, clumped, and down the croft
 Bestrid by shadows, beaten, tossed;
 It seems a scythe, it seems a rod.
 The howl is up at the howl's accost;
 The shivers greet and the shivers nod.

Is the land ship? we are rolled, we drive
 Tritonily, cleaving hiss and hum;
 Whirl with the dead, or mount or dive,
 Or down in dregs, or on in scum.
 And drums the distant, pipes the near,
 And vale and hill are grey in grey,
 As when the surge is crumbling sheer,
 And sea-mews wing the haze of spray.
 Clouds — are they bony witches? — swarms
 Darting swift on the robber's flight,
 Hurry an infant sky in arms:
 It peeps, it beck; 'tis day, 'tis night.
 Black while over the loop of blue
 The swathe is closed, like shroud on corse.
 Lo, as if swift the Furies flew,
 The Fates at heel at a cry to horse!

Interpret me the savage whirr:
 And is it Nature scourged, or she,
 Her offspring's executioner,
 Reducing land to barren sea?
 But is there meaning in a day
 When this fierce angel of the air,
 Intent to throw, and haply slay,
 Can, for what breath of life we bear,
 Exact the wrestle? Call to mind
 The many meanings glistening up
 When Nature to her nurslings kind,
 Hands them the fruitage and the cup!
 And seek we rich significance
 Not elsewhere than with those tides
 Of pleasure on the sunned expanse,
 Whose flow deludes, whose ebb derides?

Look in the face of men who fare
 Lock-mouthed, a match in lungs and thews
 For this fierce angel of the air,
 To twist with him and take his bruise.
 That is the face beloved of old
 Of Earth, young mother of her brood:
 Nor broken for us shows the mold
 When muscle is in mind renewed:
 Though farther from her nature rude,
 Yet nearer to her spirit's hold.
 And though of gentler mood serene,
 Still forceful of her fountain-jet.
 So shall her blows be shrewdly met,
 Be luminously read the scene

Where Life is at her grindstone set,
That she may give us edgeing keen,
String us for battle, till as play
The common strokes of fortune shower.
Such meaning in a dagger-day 65
Our wits may clasp to wax in power.
Yea, feel us warmer at her breast,
By spin of blood in lusty drill,
Than when her honeyed hands caressed,
And Pleasure, sapping, seemed to fill. 70

Behold the life at ease; it drifts.
The sharpened life commands its course.
She winnows, winnows roughly; sifts,
To dip her chosen in her source:
Contention is the vital force, 75
Whence pluck they brain, her prize of gifts,
Sky of the senses! on which height,
Not disconnected, yet released,
They see how spirit comes to light,
Through conquest of the inner beast, 80
Which Measure tames to movement sane,
In harmony with what is fair.
Never is Earth misread by brain:
That is the welling of her, there
The mirror: with one step beyond, 85
For likewise is it voice; and more,
Benignest kinship bids respond,
When wail the weak, and then restore
Whom days as fell as this may rive.
While Earth sits ebon in her gloom, 90
Us atomies of life alive
Unheeding, bent on life to come.
Her children of the laboring brain,
These are the champions of the race,
True parents, and the sole humane, 95
With understanding for their base.
Earth yields the milk, but all her mind
Is vowed to thresh for stouter stock.
Her passion for old giantkind,
That scaled the mount, uphurled the rock, 100
Devolves on them who read aright
Her meaning and devoutly serve;
Nor in her starlessness of night
Peruse her with the craven nerve:
But even as she from grass to corn, 105
To eagle high from grubbing mole,
Prove in strong brain her noblest born,
The station for the flight of soul.

ODE TO THE COMIC SPIRIT

This poem must be read thoughtfully, and allowance should be made for abruptness and circumlocution in both the ideas and imagery. Compare also Meredith's *Essay on Comedy*.

Sword of Common Sense! —
Our surest gift: the sacred chain

Of man to man: firm earth for trust
In structures vowed to permanence: —
Thou guardian issue of the harvest brain! 5
Implacable perforce of just;
With that good treasure in defence,
Which is our gold crushed out of joy and
pain
Since first men planted foot and hand was
king:
Bright, nimble of the marrow-nerve 10
To wield thy double edge, retort
Or hold the deadlier reserve,
And through thy victim's weapon sting:
Thine is the service, thine the sport
This shifty heart of ours to hunt 15
Across its webs and round the many a ring
Where fox it is, or snake, or mingled seeds
Occasion heats to shape, or the poor smoke
Struck from a puff-ball, or the troughster's
grunt;
Once lion of our desert's trodden weeds; 20
And but for thy straight finger at the yoke,
Again to be the lordly paw,
Naming his appetites his needs,
Behind a decorative cloak:
Thou, of the highest, the unwritten Law 25
We read upon that building's architrave
In the mind's firmament, by men upraised
With sweat of blood when they had quitted
cave
For fellowship, and rearward looked amazed,
Where the prime motive gapes a lurid jaw, 30
Thou, soul of wakened heads, art armed to
warn,
Restrain, lest we backslide on whence we
sprang,
Scarce better than our dwarf beginning
shoot,
Of every gathered pearl and blossom shorn;
Through thee, in novel wiles to win dis-
guise, 35
Seen are the pits of the disruptor, seen
His rebel agitation at our root:
Thou hast him out of hawking eyes;
Nor ever morning of the clang
Young Echo sped on hill from horn 40
In forest blown when scent was keen
Off earthly dews besprinkling blades
Of covert grass more merrily rang
The yelp of chase down alleys green,
Fourth of the headlong-pouring glades, 45
Over the dappled fallows wild away,
Than thy fine unaccented scorn
At sight of man's old secret brute,
Devout for pasture on his prey,
Advancing, yawning to devour; 50
With step of deer, with voice of flute,
Haply with visage of the lily flower.

Let the cock crow and ruddy morn
His handmaiden appear! Youth claims his
hour.

The generously ludicrous 55
Espouses it. But see we sons of day,
On whom Life leans for guidance in our fight,
Accept the throb for lord of us;
For lord, for the main central light
That gives direction, not the eclipse; — 60
Or dost thou look where niggard Age,
Demanding reverence for wrinkles, whips
A tumbled top to grind a wolf's worn
tooth; —

Hoar despot on our final stage,
In dotage of a stunted Youth; — 65
Or it may be some venerable sage,
Not having thee awake in him, compact
Of wisdom else, the breast's old tempter
trips;

Or see we ceremonial state,
Robbing the gilded beast, exact 70
Abjection, while the crackskull name of Fate
Is used to stamp and hallow printed fact;
A cruel corner lengthens up thy lips;
These are thy game wherever men engage:
These and, majestic in a borrowed shape, 75
The major and the minor potentate,
Creative of their various ape; —
The tiptoe mortals triumphing to write
Upon a perishable page

An inch above their fellows' height; — 80
The criers of foregone wisdom, who impose
Its slough on live conditions, much for the
greed

Of our first hungry figure wide agape; —
Call up thy hounds of laughter to their run.
These, that would have men still of men be
foes, 85

Eternal fox to prowl and pike to feed;
Would keep our life the whirly pool
Of turbid stuff dishonoring History;
The herd the drover's herd, the fool the fool,
Ourself our slavish self's infernal sun; 90
These are the children of the heart untaught
By thy quick founts to beat abroad, by thee
Untamed to tone its passions under thought,
The rich humaneness reading in thy fun.
Of them a world of coltish heels for school, 95
We have; a world with driving wrecks be-
strewn.

'Tis written of the Gods of human mold,
Those Nectar Gods, of glorious stature hewn
To quicken hymns, that they did hear in-
censed,

Satiric comments overbold, 100
From one whose part was by decree
The jester's; but they boiled to feel him bite.

Better for them had they with Reason
fenced
Or smiled corrected! They in the great
Gods' might,

Their prober crushed, as fingers flea. 105
Crumbled Olympus when the sovereign sire
His fatal kick to Momus gave, albeit
Men could behold the sacred Mount aspire,
The Satirist pass by on limping feet.
Those Gods who saw the ejected laugh
alight 110

Below, had then their last of airy glee;
They in the cup sought Laughter's drowned
sprite,

Fed to dire fatness off uncurbed conceit.
Eyes under saw them waddle on their Mount,
And drew them down; to flattest earth they
rolled. 115

This know we veritable. O Sage of Mirth!
Can it be true, the story men recount
Of the fall'n plight of the great Gods on
earth?

How they being deathless, though of human
mold,

With human cravings, undecaying frames, 120
Must labor for subsistence; are a band
Whom a loose-cheeked, wide-lipped gay
cripple leads

At haunts of holiday on summer sand:
And lightly he will hint to one that heeds,
Names in pained designation of them,
names 125

Ensphered on blue skies and on black, which
twirl

Our hearing madly from our seeing dazed,
Add Bacchus unto both; and he entreats
(His baby dimples in maternal chaps
Running wild labyrinths of line and curl) 130

Compassion for his masterful Trombone,
Whose thunder is the brass of how he blazed
Of old: for him of the mountain-muscle feats,
Who guts a drum to fetch a snappish groan:
For his fierce bugler horning onset, whom
A truncheon-battered helmet caps. . . 136
The creature is of earnest mien
To plead a sorrow darker than the tomb.

His Harp and Triangle, in tone subdued,
He names; they are a rayless red and
white; 140

The dawn-hued libertine, the gibbous prude.
And, if we recognize his Tambourine,
He asks; exhausted names her: she has be-
come

A globe in cupolas; the blowsiest queen
Of overflowing dome on dome; 145
Redundancy contending with the tight,
Leaping the dam! He fondly calls, his girl,
The buxom tripper with the goblet-smile,

Refreshful. O but now his brows are dun,
Bunched are his lips, as when distilling
guile, 150

To drop his venomous: the Dame of dames,
Flower of the world, that honey one,
She of the earthly rose in the sea-pearl,
To whom the world ran ocean for her kiss;
He names her, as a worshipper he names, 155
And indicates with a contemptuous thumb.
The lady meanwhile lures the mob, alike
Ogles the bursters of the horn and drum.
Curtain her close! her open arms
Have suckers for beholders: she to this? 160
For that she could not, save in fury, hear
A sharp corrective utterance flick
Her idle manners, for the laugh to strike
Beauty so breeding beauty, without peer
Above the snows, among the flowers? She
reaps 165

This moldy garner of the fatal kick?
Gross with the sacrifice of Circe-swarms,
Astarte¹ of vile sweets that slay, malign,
From Greek resplendent to Phœnician foul,
The trader in attractions sinks, all brine 170
To thoughts of taste; is 't love? — bark, dog!
hoot, owl!

And she is blushless: ancient worship weeps.
Suicide Graces dangle down the charms
Sprawling like gourds on outer garden-heaps.
She stands in her unholy oily leer 175
A statue losing feature, weather-sick
Mid draggled creepers of twined ivy sere.
The curtain cried for magnifies to see! —
We cannot quench our one corrupting glance:
The vision of the rumor will not flee. 180
Doth the Boy own such Mother? — shoot
his dart

To bring her, countless as the crested deeps,
Her subjects of the uncorrected heart?
False is that vision, shrieks the devotee;
Incredible, we echo; and anew 185
Like a far growling lightning-cloud it leaps.
Low humorist this leader seems; perchance
Pitched from his University career,
Adept at classic fooling. Yet of mold
Human those Gods were; deathless too: 190
On high they not as meditatives paced:
Prodigiously they did the deeds of flesh:
Descending, they would touch the lowest
here:

And she, that lighted form of blue and gold,
Whom the seas gave, all earth, all earth em-
braced; 195

Exulting in the great hauls of her mesh;
Desired and hated, desperately dear;
Most human of them was. No more pursue!
Enough that the black story can be told.

¹ The Phœnician goddess of love.

It preaches to the eminently placed: 200
For whom disastrous wreckage is nigh due,
Paints omen. Truly they our throbbler had;
The passions plumping, passions playing
leech,

Cunning to trick us for the day's good
cheer.

Our uncorrected human heart will swell 205
To notions monstrous, doings mad
As billows on a foam-lashed beach;
Borne on the tides of alternating heats,
Will drug the brain, will doom the soul as
well;

Call the closed mouth of that harsh final
Power 210

To speak in judgement: Nemesis, the fell:
Of those bright Gods assembled, offspring
sour;

The last surviving on the upper seats;
As with men Reason when their hearts rebel.

Ah, what a fruitless breeder is this heart, 215
Full of the mingled seeds, each eating each.
Not wiser of our mark than at the start,
It surges like the wrath-faced father Sea
To countering winds; a force blind-eyed,
On endless rounds of aimless reach; 220
Emotion for the source of pride,
The grounds of faith in fixity
Above our flesh; its cravings urging speech,
Inspiring prayer; by turns a lump
Swung on a time-piece, and by turns 225
A quivering energy to jump
For seats angelical: it shrinks, it yearns,
Loves, loathes; is flame or cinders; lastly
cloud

Capping a sullen crater: and mankind
We see cloud-capped, an army of the
dark, 230

Because of thy straight leadership declined;
At heels of this or that delusive spark:
Now when the multitudinous races press
Elbow to elbow hourly more,
A thickened host; when now we hear
aloud 235

Life for the very life implore
A signal of a visioned mark;
Light of the mind, the mind's discourse,
The rational in graciousness,
Thee by acknowledgement enthroned, 240
To tame and lead that blind-eyed force
In harmony of harness with the crowd,
For payment of their dues; as yet disowned,
Save where some dutiful lone creature,
vowed

To holy work, deems it the heart's intent; 245
Or where a silken circle views it cowed,
The seeming figure of concordance, bent

On satiating tyrant lust
Or barren fits of sentiment.

Thou wilt not have our paths befouled 250

By simulation; are we vile to view,
The heavens shall see us clean of our own dust,
Beneath thy breezy flitting wing:

They make their mirror upon faces true; 254
And where they win reflection, lucid heave
The under tides of this hot heart seen through.
Beneficently wilt thou clip

All oversteppings of the plumed,
The puffed, and bid the masker strip,
And into the crowned windbag thrust, 260
Tearing the mortal from the vital thing,

A lightning o'er the half-illumed,
Who to base brute-dominion cleave,
Yet mark effects, and shun the flash,
Till their drowsed wits a beam conceive, 265

To spy a wound without a gash,
The magic in a turn of wrist,
And how are wedded heart and head regaled
When Wit o'er Folly blows the mort,
And their high note of union spreads 270
Wide from the timely word with conquest
charged;

Victorious laughter, of no loud report,
If heard; derision as divinely veiled
As terrible Immortals in rose-mist,
Given to the vision of arrested men: 275

Whereat they feel within them weave
Community its closer threads,
And are to our fraternal state enlarged;
Like warm fresh blood is their enlivened ken;

They learn that thou art not of alien sort, 280
Speaking the tongue by vipers hissed,
Or of the frosty heights unscaled,
Or of the vain who simple speech distort,
Or of the vapors pointing on to nought
Along cold skies; though sharp and high thy
pitch: 285

As when sole homeward the belated treads,
And hears aloft a clamor broid,
That once had seemed the woomstick witch
Horribly violating cloud for drought:
He from the rub of minds dispersing fears, 290
Hears migrants marshalling their midnight
train;

Homeliest order in black sky appears,
Not less than in the lighted village steads.
So do those half-illumed wax clear to share
A cry that is our common voice; the note 295
Of fellowship upon a loftier plane,
Above embattled castle-wall and moat;
And toning drops as from pure heaven it
sheds.

So thou for washing a phantasmal air,
For thy sweet singing keynote of the wise, 300

Laughter — the joy of Reason seeing fade
Obstruction into Earth's renewing beds,
Beneath the stroke of her good servant's
blade —

Thenceforth art as their earth-star hailed;
Gain of the years, conjunction's prize. 305

The greater heart in thy appeal to heads,
They see, thou Captain of our civil Fort!
By more elusive savages assailed
On each ascending stage; untired

Both inner foe and outer to cut short, 310
And blow to chaff pretenders void of grist:
Showing old tiger's claws, old crocodile's
Yard-grin of eager grinders, slim to sight,
Like forms in running water, oft when smiles,

When pearly tears, when fluent lips de-
light: 315

But never with the slayer's malice fired:
As little as informs an infant's fist
Clenched at the sneeze! Thou would'st but
have us be

Good sons of mother soil, whereby to grow
Branching on fairer skies, one stately tree; 320
Broad of the tilth for flowering at the Court;
Which is the tree bound fast to wave it
tress;

Of strength controlled sheer beauty to be-
stow.

Ambrosial heights of possible acquist,
Where souls of men with soul of man con-
sort, 325

And all look higher to new loveliness
Begotten of the look: thy mark is there;
While on our temporal ground alive,
Rightly though fearfully thou wieldest
sword,

Of finer temper now a numbered learn 330
That they resisting thee themselves resist;
And not thy bigger joy to smite and drive,
Prompt the dense herd to butt, and set the
snare

Witching them into pitfalls for hoarse shouts.
More now, and hourly more, and of the
Lord 335

Thou lead'st to, doth this rebel heart dis-
cern,

When pinched ascetic and red sensualist
Alternately recurrent freeze or burn,
And of its old religions it has doubts.
It fears thee less when thou hast shown it
bare; 340

Less hates, part understands, nor much
resents,

When the prized objects it has raised for
prayer,

For fitful prayer; — repentance dreading fire,
Impelled by aches; the blindness which re-
pents

Like the poor trampled worm that writhes in
mire; — 345
Are sounded by thee, and thou darest probe
Old Institutions and Establishments,
Once fortresses against the floods of sin,
For what their worth; and questioningly prod
For why they stand upon a racing globe, 350
Impeding blocks, less useful than the clod;
Their angel out of them, a demon in.

This half-enlightened heart, still doomed to
fret,
To hurl at vanities, to drift in shame
Of gain or loss, bewailing the sure rod, 355
Shall of predestination wed thee yet.
Something it gathers of what things should
drop
At entrance on new times; of how thrice
broad
The world of minds communicative; how
A straggling Nature classed in school, and
scored 360
With stripes admonishing, may yield to
plough

Fruitfullest furrows, nor for waxing tame
Be feeble on an Earth whose gentler crop
Is its most living, in the mind that steers,
By Reason led, her way of tree and flame, 365
Beyond the genuflexions and the tears;
Upon an Earth that cannot stop,
Where upward is the visible aim,
And ever we espy the greater God,
For simple pointing at a good adored: 370
Proof of the closer neighbourhood. Head on,
Sword of the many, light of the few! untwist
Or cut our tangles till fair space is won
Beyond a briared wood of austere brow,
Relieved of discord by thy timely word 375
At intervals refreshing life: for thou
Art verily Keeper of the Muse's Key;
Thyself no vacant melodist;
On lower land elective even as she;
Holding, as she, all dissonance abhorred; 380
Advising to her measured steps in flow;
And teaching how for being subjected free
Past thought of freedom we may come to
know
The music of the meaning of Accord.

LOVE IN THE VALLEY

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-
sward,
Couched with her arms behind her golden
head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple
idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.

Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her, s
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather
slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but em-
brace me:
Then would she hold me and never let me
go?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the
swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's
light 10
Circling the surface to meet his mirrored
winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her
flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-
tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set
of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and con-
quer, 15
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were
she won!

When her mother tends her before the
laughing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing
wedded,
More love should I have, and much less
care. 20
When her mother tends her before the lighted
mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her
curls,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing
wedded,
I should miss but one for many boys and
girls.

Heartless she is as the shadow in the
meadows 25
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy
noon.
No, she is athirst and drinking up her
wonder:
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new
moon.
Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid
measure,
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal
no less: 30
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the
flowers with hailstones
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise
and bless.

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweep-
ing

Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.

Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note un-
varied, 35

Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown
eve-jar.

Darker grows the valley, more and more for-
getting:

So were it with me if forgetting could be
willed.

Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bub-
bling well-spring,

Tell it to forget the source that keeps it
filled. 40

Stepping down the hill with her fair com-
panions,

Arm in arm, all against the raying
West,

Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she
marches,

Brave in her shape, and sweeter unpos-
sessed.

Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awak-
ing 45

Whispered the world was; morning light
is she.

Love that so desires would fain keep her
changeless;

Fain would fling the net, and fain have her
free. 50

Happy happy time, when the white star
hovers

Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy
dew, 55

Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart
the darkness,

Threading it with color, like yewberries the
yew.

Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East
deepens

Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud
swells.

Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is,
and secret; 55

Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as
cold sea-shells. 60

Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and
lighting

Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills
along,

Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant
laughter

Chill as a dull face frowning on a
song. 65

Ay, but shows the South-West a ripple-
feathered bosom

Blown to silver while the clouds are shaken
and ascend

Scaling the mid-heavens as they stream,
there comes a sunset

Rich, deep like love in beauty without end.

When at dawn she sighs, and like an infant
to the window 65

Turns grave eyes craving light, released
from dreams,

Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily
Bursting out of bud in havens of the
streams.

When from bed she rises clothed from neck
to ankle

In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of
May, 70

Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden lily
Pure from the night, and splendid for the
day. 75

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed twi-
light,

Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-
delighted skylark, 75

Clear as though the dewdrops had their
voice in him.

Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the ray-
less planet,

Fountain-full he pours the spraying
fountain-showers.

Let me hear her laughter, I would have her
ever

Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the
flowers. 80

All the girls are out with their baskets for
the primrose;

Up lanes, woods through, they troop in
joyful bands.

My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now
she loiters,

Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs her
hands.

Such a look will tell that the violets are
peeping, 85

Coming the rose: and unaware a cry
Springs in her bosom for odors and for color,

Covert and the nightingale; she knows not
why. 90

Kerchiefed head and chin she darts between
her tulips,

Streaming like a willow gray in arrowy
rain: 95

Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their
angel
She will be; she lifts them, and on she
speeds again.
Black the driving raincloud breasts the iron
gateway:
She is forth to cheer a neighbor lacking
mirth.
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for
thunder 95
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.
Prim little scholars are the flowers of her
garden,
Trained to stand in rows, and asking if
they please.
I might love them well but for loving more
the wild ones:
O my wild ones! they tell me more than
these. 100
You, my wild one, you tell of honeyed field-
rose,
Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even
as they,
They by the wayside are earnest of your
goodness,
You are of life's, on the banks that line the
way.
Peering at her chamber the white crowns the
red rose, 105
Jasmine winds the porch with stars two
and three.
Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry
jasmine
Breathes a falling breath that carries
thoughts of me.
Sweeter unpossessed, have I said of her my
sweetest?
Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the
jasmine breathes, 110
Luring her to love; she sleeps; the starry jas-
mine
Bears me to her pillow under white rose-
wreaths.
Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-
glades;
Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray
leaf;
Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are
yellow; 115
Blue-necked the wheat sways, yellowing
to the sheaf.
Green-yellow bursts from the copse the
laughing yaffle;
Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and
shine:

Earth in her heart laughs looking at the
heavens,
Thinking of the harvest: I look and think
of mine. 120
This I may know: her dressing and un-
dressing
Such a change of light shows as when the
skies in sport
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over
thunder
Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into
port
White sails furl; or on the ocean bor-
ders 125
White sails lean along the waves leaping
green.
Visions of her shower before me, but from
eyesight
Guarded she would be like the sun were she
seen.
Front door and back of the mossed old farm-
house
Open with the morn, and in a breezy
link 130
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadowed
orchard,
Green across a rill where on sand the min-
nows wink.
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer
Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting
notes
Call my darling up with round and roguish
challenge: 135
Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing
throats!
Cool was the woodside; cool as her white
dairy
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there
the boys from school,
Cricketing below, rushed brown and red with
sunshine;
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed
cool! 140
Spying from the farm, herself she fetched a
pitcher
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the
beak.
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tip-
toe,
Said, "I will kiss you": she laughed and
leaned her cheek.
Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red
roof 145
Through the long noon coo, crooning
through the coo.

Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy
roadway

Sometimes pipes a chaffinch; loose droops
the blue.

Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and
fly. 150

Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her no-
where,

Lightning may come, straight rains and
tiger sky.

O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-
armful!

O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!

O the treasure-tresses one another over 155
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the
waist!

Slain are the poppies that shot their random
scarlet

Quick amid the wheatears: wound about
the waist,

Gathered, see these brides of Earth one
blush of ripeness!

O the nutbrown tresses nodding inter-
laced! 160

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded
snow:

Eastward large and still lights up a bower of
moonrise,

Whence at her leisure steps the moon
aglow.

Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-
tree 165

Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.

Here may life on death or death on life be
paid.

Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot
die!

Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow
chamber

Where there is no window, read not heaven
or her. 170

"When she was tiny," one aged woman
quavers,

Plucks at my heart and leads me by the
ear.

Faults she had once as she learned to run and
tumbled:

Faults of feature some see, beauty not
complete.

Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy 175
Earth and air, may have faults from head
to feet.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she
lingers,

Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new
surprise

High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.

Something friends have told her fills her
heart to brimming, 181

Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her,
and tames. —

Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,
Arms up, she dropped: our souls were in
our names.

Soon will she lie like a white-frost sunrise. 185

Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale
as rye,

Long since your sheaves have yielded to the
thresher,

Felt the girdle loosened, seen the tresses
fly.

Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.

Swift with the to-morrow, green-winged
Spring! 190

Sing from the South-West, bring her back the
truants,

Nightingale and swallow, song and dip-
ping wing.

Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April

Spreading bough on bough a primrose
mountain, you,

Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the sky-
fields, 195

Youngest green transfused in silver shining
through:

Fairer than the lily, than the wild white
cherry:

Fair as in image my seraph love appears

Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my
eyelids:

Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on
tears. 200

Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my
need.

Every woodland tree is flushing like the dog-
wood,

Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like
the reed.

Flushing like the dogwood crimson in
October; 205

Streaming like the flag-reed South-West
blown;

Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted
whitebeam:

All seem to know what is for heaven
alone.

THOMAS HARDY (1840-1928)

Thomas Hardy forms with George Meredith one of the most interesting contrasts of modern literature. He was born in Dorchester, and there spent most of his life. He was apprenticed to an architect, but like Meredith broke away into literature. Although he wrote verse as a boy, his first publications were novels, among the most important of which are: *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895). After the last mentioned of these Hardy gave himself for years to the production of a vast drama in verse based on the Napoleonic wars, called *The Dynasts*. In later years he has written a large body of miscellaneous verse. Hardy's contrast with Meredith is seen both in his novels and in his poetry. Meredith believes above all in conscious intelligence. The characters of his novels are drawn from the walks of life where consciousness is clearest. Hardy, on the contrary, deals with life where it is least intelligent, most instinctive. Both Meredith and Hardy are poets of nature, but to the former nature is a kind if stern mother; to the latter a symbol of the crass indifference of the universe. In his fiction Hardy is fond of dwelling on the accidents and coincidences of life which seem the result of a stupid or malevolent power at work behind the scenes. Many of his poems are based on episodes of the same sort. Above all Hardy is a stern realist in his poetry with none of the radiant hope which Meredith displays. The two writers represent two different phases of the effect of science upon the human spirit in the later nineteenth century.

The complete works of Thomas Hardy are published by The Macmillan Company, through whose kindness the following poems are reprinted.

HER DILEMMA

(IN — CHURCH)

The two were silent in a sunless church,
Whose mildewed walls, uneven paving-
stones,
And wasted carvings passed antique re-
search;
And nothing broke the clock's dull mono-
tones.

Leaning against a wormy poppy-head, 5
So wan and worn that he could scarcely
stand,
— For he was soon to die, — he softly
said,
"Tell me you love me!" — holding long her
hand.

She would have given a world to breathe
"yes" truly,
So much his life seemed hanging on her
mind, 10
And hence she lied, her heart persuaded
thoroughly
'Twas worth her soul to be a moment
kind.

But the sad need thereof, his nearing
death,
So mocked humanity that she shamed to
prize
A world conditioned thus, or care for
breath 15
Where Nature such dilemmas could de-
vise.

1866.

REVULSION

Though I waste watches framing words to
fetter
Some unknown spirit to mine in clasp and
kiss,
Out of the night there looms a sense 'twere
better
To fail obtaining whom one fails to miss.

For winning love we win the risk of losing, 5
And losing love is as one's life were riven;
It cuts like contumely and keen ill-using
To cede what was superfluously given.

Let me then never feel the fateful thrilling
That devastates the love-worn wooer's
frame, 10

The hot ado of fevered hopes, the chilling
That agonizes disappointed aim!
So may I live no junctive law fulfilling,
And my heart's table bear no woman's
name.

1866.

HER INITIALS

Upon a poet's page I wrote
Of old two letters of her name;
Part seemed she of the effulgent thought
Whence that high singer's rapture came.
— When now I turn the leaf the same 5
Immortal light illumines the lay,
But from the letters of her name
The radiance has waned away!

1869.

ROME

AT THE PYRAMID OF CESTIUS NEAR THE
GRAVES OF SHELLEY AND KEATS

(1887)

Who, then, was Cestius,
And what is he to me? —
Amid thick thoughts and memories multitudi-
nous
One thought alone brings he.

I can recall no word
Of anything he did; 5
For me he is a man who died and was interred
To leave a pyramid

Whose purpose was exprest
Not with its first design, 10
Nor till, far down in Time, beside it found
their rest
Two countrymen of mine.

Cestius in life, maybe,
Slew, breathed out threatening;
I know not. This I know: in death all si-
lently 15
He does a finer thing,

In beckoning pilgrim feet
With marble finger high
To where, by shadowy wall and history-
haunted street,
Those matchless singers lie. . . . 20

— Say, then, he lived and died
That stones which bear his name
Should mark, through Time, where two im-
mortal Shades abide; 10
It is an ample fame.

LAUSANNE

IN GIBBON'S OLD GARDEN: 11-12 P.M.

June 27, 1897

(The 110th anniversary of the completion of the
"Decline and Fall" at the same hour and place)

A spirit seems to pass,
Formal in pose, but grave withal and
grand:
He contemplates a volume in his hand,
And far lamps fleck him through the thin
acacias.

Anon the book is closed, 5
With "It is finished!" And at the
alley's end

He turns, and when on me his glances
bend
As from the Past comes speech — small,
muted, yet composed.

"How fares the Truth now? — Ill?
— Do pens but sily further her ad-
vance? 10
May one not speed her but in phrase
askance?
Do scribes aver the Comic to be Reverend
still?

"Still rule those minds on earth
At whom sage Milton's wormwood words
were hurled:
'Truth like a bastard comes into the world
Never without ill-fame to him who gives her
birth'?" 16

AN AUGUST MIDNIGHT

I

A shaded lamp and a waving blind,
And the beat of a clock from a distant floor:
On this scene enter — winged, horned, and
spined —

A longlegs, a moth, and a dumbledore; 5
While 'mid my page there idly stands
A sleepy fly, that rubs its hands . . .

2

Thus meet we five, in this still place,
At this point of time, at this point in space.
— My guests besmear my new-penned line,
Or bang at the lamp and fall supine. 10
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. Yet why?
They know Earth-secrets that know not I.
MAX GATE, 1899.

EMBARCATION

(SOUTHAMPTON DOCKS: OCTOBER 1899)

Here, where Vespasian's legions struck the
sands,
And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,
And Henry's army leapt afloat to win
Convincing triumphs over neighbor lands,

Vaster battalions press for further strands, 5
To argue in the selfsame bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, and pact, and
code,
Still fails to mend. — Now deckward tramp
the bands,

Yellow as autumn leaves, alive as spring;
 And as each host draws out upon the sea 10
 Beyond which lies the tragical To-be,
 None dubious of the cause, none murmur-
 ing,

Wives, sisters, parents, wave white hands
 and smile,
 As if they knew not that they weep the
 while.

A CHRISTMAS GHOST-STORY

South of the Line, inland from far Durban,
 A moldering soldier lies — your country-
 man.

Awry and doubled up are his gray bones,
 And on the breeze his puzzled phantom
 moans

Nightly to clear Canopus: "I would know 5
 By whom and when the All-Earth-gladdening
 Law

Of Peace, brought in by that Man Crucified,
 Was ruled to be inept, and set aside?

And what of logic or of truth appears
 In tacking 'Anno Domini' to the years? 10
 Near twenty-hundred liveried thus have
 hied,

But tarries, yet the Cause for which He
 died."

Christmas-eve 1899.

"I SAID TO LOVE"

I said to Love,
 "It is not now as in old days
 When men adored thee and thy ways

All else above;
 Named thee the Boy, the Bright, the One 5
 Who spread a heaven beneath the sun,"

I said to Love.

I said to him,
 "We now know more of thee than then;
 We were but weak in judgment when, 10
 With hearts abrim,

We clamored thee that thou would'st please
 Inflict on us thine agonies,"

I said to him.

I said to Love, 15
 "Thou art not young, thou art not fair,
 No elfin darts, no cherub air,
 Nor swan, nor dove

Are thine; but features pitiless,
 And iron daggers of distress," 20

I said to Love.

"Depart then, Love! . . .
 — Man's race shall perish, threatenest thou,
 Without thy kindling coupling-vow?

The age to come the man of now 25
 Know nothing of? —

We fear not such a threat from thee;
 We are too old in apathy!

Mankind shall cease. — So let it be," 30
 I said to Love.

Pub. 1901.

TO LIFE

O Life with the sad seared face,
 I weary of seeing thee,
 And thy draggled cloak, and thy hobbling
 pace,
 And thy too-forced pleasantry!

I know-what thou would'st tell 5
 Of Death, Time, Destiny —
 I have known it long, and know, too, well
 What it all means for me.

But canst thou not array
 Thyself in rare disguise, 10
 And feign like truth, for one mad day,
 That Earth is Paradise?

I'll tune me to the mood,
 And mumm with thee till eve;
 And maybe what as interlude 15
 I feign, I shall believe!

Pub. 1901.

AT CASTERBRIDGE FAIR

I

THE BALLAD-SINGER

Sing, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune;
 Make me forget that there was ever a one
 I walked with in the meek light of the moon
 When the day's work was done.

Rhyme, Ballad-rhymer, start a country
 song; 5

Make me forget that she whom I loved well
 Swore she would love me dearly, love me
 long,

Then — what I cannot tell!

Sing, Ballad-singer, from your little book;
 Make me forget those heart-breaks, achings,
 fears; 10

Make me forget her name, her sweet sweet
 look —

Make me forget her tears.

II

FORMER BEAUTIES

These market-dames, mid-aged, with lips
thin-drawn,
And tissues sere,
Are they the ones we loved in years ago,
And courted here?

Are these the muslined pink young things to
whom 5
We vowed and swore
In nooks on summer Sundays by the Froom,
Or Budmouth shore?

Do they remember those gay tunes we trod
Clasped on the green; 10
Aye; trod till moonlight set on the beaten
sod
A satin sheen?

They must forget, forget! They cannot
know
What once they were,
Or memory would transfigure them, and 15
show
Them always fair.

III

AFTER THE CLUB-DANCE

Black'on frowns east on Maidon,
And westward to the sea,
But on neither is his frown laden
With scorn, as his frown on me!

At dawn my heart grew heavy, 5
I could not sip the wine,
I left the jocund bevy
And that young man o' mine.

The roadside elms pass by me, — 10
Why do I sink with shame
When the birds a-perch there eye me?
They, too, have done the same!

IV

THE MARKET-GIRL

Nobody took any notice of her as she stood
on the causey kerb,
All eager to sell her honey and apples and
bunches of garden herb;
And if she had offered to give her wares and
herself with them too that day,
I doubt if a soul would have cared to take a
bargain so choice away.

But chancing to trace her sunburnt grace
that morning as I passed nigh, 5
I went and I said "Poor maidy dear! —
and will none of the people buy?"
And so it began; and soon we knew what the
end of it all must be,
And I found that though no others had bid,
a prize had been won by me.

V

THE INQUIRY

And are ye one of Hermitage —
Of Hermitage, by Ivel Road,
And do ye know, in Hermitage
A thatch-roofed house where sengreens grow?
And does John Waywood live there still — 6
He of the name that there abode
When father hurdled on the hill
Some fifteen years ago?

Does he now speak o' Patty Beech,
The Patty Beech he used to — see, 10
Or ask at all if Patty Beech
Is known or heard of out this way?
— Ask if ever she's living yet,
And where her present home may be,
And how she bears life's fag and fret 15
After so long a day?

In years ago at Hermitage
This faded face was counted fair,
None fairer; and at Hermitage
We swore to wed when he should thrive. 20
But never a chance had he or I,
And waiting made his wish outwear,
And Time, that dooms man's love to die,
Preserves a maid's alive.

VI

A WIFE WAITS

Will's at the dance in the Club-room below,
Where the tall liquor-cups foam;
I on the pavement up here by the Bow,¹
Wait, wait, to steady him home.

Will and his partner are treading a tune, 5
Loving companions they be;
Willy, before we were married in June,
Said he loved no one but me;

Said he would let his old pleasures all go
Ever to live with his Dear. 10
Will's at the dance in the Club-room below,
Shivering I wait for him here.

¹ The old name for the curved corner by the cross-streets in the middle of Casterbridge. (Hardy.)

VII

AFTER THE FAIR

The singers are gone from the Cornmarket-
place

With their broadsheets of rhymes,
The street rings no longer in treble and
bass

With their skits on the times,
And the Cross, lately thronged, is a dim
naked space
That but echoes the stammering
chimes.¹

From Clock-corner steps, as each quarter
ding-dongs,

Away the folk roam
By the "Hart" and Grey's Bridge into by-
ways and "dongs,"
Or across the ridged loam; 10

¹ "The Chimes" will be listened for in vain here at mid-
night now, having been abolished some years ago. (Hardy.)

The younger ones shrilling the lately heard
songs,

The old saying, "Would we were home."

The shy-seeming maiden so mute in the fair
Now rattles and talks,

And that one who looked the most swagger-
ing there 15

Grows sad as she walks,
And she who seemed eaten by cankering care
In statuesque sturdiness stalks.

And midnight clears High Street of all but
the ghosts

Of its buried burghes, 20
From the latest far back to those old Roman
hosts

Whose remains one yet sees,
Who loved, laughed, and fought, hailed their
friends, drank their toasts

At their meeting-times here, just as these!
1902.

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865--

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay, India, in 1865; and in India, while a young newspaper man, he burst into world-wide fame with his short stories of Indian life and his songs of the British army, *Barrack Room Ballads*. From that time on, until a score of years ago when his steady, vigorous production slowed down, he was the most prominent, as he has been among the ablest, of British writers, as a poet, a novelist, and a master of the short story.

Kipling is the singer of the widespread British Empire. He is also the singer of Tommy Atkins, and as such has not hesitated to have a good-natured fling at the Crown. Nor did he refrain, during the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, to sound a warning, in his *Recessional*, against an unsound imperialism.

All of Kipling is good reading. No student should miss his novel *Kim*, the poetry in *Barrack Room Ballads* and *The Seven Seas*, the beast tales in the *Jungle Books*, and the masterful short stories in *The Day's Work*. In them he will see Kipling's originality and extraordinary skill, both in technique and in insight into the souls of men.

A BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and
never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West,
Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to
face, tho' they come from the ends of
the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the
Border side, 5

And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is
the Colonel's pride:

He has lifted her out of the stable-door be-
tween the dawn and the day,

And turned the calkins upon her feet, and
ridden her far away.

Then up spoke the Colonel's son that led a
troop of the Guides:

"Is there never a man of all my men can say
where Kamal hides?" 10

Then up and spoke Mohammed Khan, the
son of the Ressaldar,

"If ye know the track of the morning-mist,
ye know where his pickets are.

At dusk he harries the Abazai — at dawn he
is into Bonair,

But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own
place to fare,

So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird
can fly, 15

By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere
he win to the Tongue of Jagai.

But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right
 swiftly turn ye then,
 For the length and the breadth of that grisly
 plain is sown with Kamal men.
 There is rock to the left, and rock to the right,
 and low lean thorn between,
 And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where
 never a man is seen." 20
 The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a
 raw rough dun was he,
 With a mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell,
 and the head of the gallows-tree.
 The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they
 bid him stay to eat —
 Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he
 sits not long at his meat.
 He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast
 as he can fly. 25
 Till he was aware of his father's mare in the
 gut of the Tongue of Jagai.
 Till he was aware of his father's mare with
 Kamal upon her back.
 And when he could spy the white of her eye,
 he made the pistol crack.
 He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the
 whistling ball went wide.
 "Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said, "show
 now if ye can ride." 30
 It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as
 blown dust-devils go;
 The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the
 mare like a barren doe.
 The dun he leaned against the bit and
 slugged his head above,
 But the red mare played with snaffle-bars, as
 a maiden plays with a glove.
 There was rock to the left and rock to the
 right, and low lean thorn between 35
 And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho'
 never a man was seen.
 They had ridden the low moon out of the sky,
 their hoofs drum up the dawn;
 The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
 mare like a new-roused fawn.
 The dun he fell at a water-course — in a woe-
 ful heap fell he,
 And Kamal has turned the red mare back,
 and pulled the rider free. 40
 He has knocked the pistol out of his hand —
 small room was there to strive,
 "'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he,
 "ye rode so long alive:
 There was not a rock for twenty mile, there
 was not a clump of tree,
 But covered a man of my own men with his
 rifle cocked on his knee.
 If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held
 it low, 45

The little jackals that flee so fast, were feast-
 ing all in a row:
 If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I
 have held it high,
 The kite that whistles above us now were
 gorged till she could not fly."
 Lightly answered the Colonel's son: — "Do
 good to bird and beast,
 But count who come from the broken meats
 before thou makest a feast. 50
 If there should follow a thousand swords to
 carry my bones away,
 Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more
 than a thief could pay.
 They will feed their horse on the standing
 crop, their men on the garnered grain,
 The thatch of the byres will serve their fires
 when all the cattle are slain.
 But if thou thinkest the price be fair, — thy
 brethren wait to sup, 55
 The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, —
 howl, dog, and call them up!
 And if thou thinkest the price be high, in
 steer and gear and stack,
 Give me my father's mare again, and I'll
 fight my own way back!"
 Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set
 him upon his feet.
 "No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "when
 wolf and gray wolf meet. 60
 May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed
 or breath;
 What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest
 at the dawn with Death?"
 Lightly answered the Colonel's son, "I hold
 by the blood of my clan:
 Take up the mare for my father's gift — by
 God, she has carried a man!"
 The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and
 nuzzled against his breast, 65
 "We be two strong men," said Kamal then,
 "but she loveth the younger best.
 So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my
 turquoise-studded rein,
 My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and
 silver stirrups twain."
 The Colonel's son a pistol drew, and held it
 muzzle-end;
 "Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he;
 "will ye take the mate from a friend?"
 "A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "a
 limb for the risk of a limb. 71
 Thy father has sent his son to me; I'll send
 my son to him!
 With that he whistled his only son, that
 dropped from a mountain-crest —
 He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he
 looked like a lance in rest.

"Now here is thy master," Kamal said,
 "who leads a troop of the Guides, ⁷⁵
 And thou must ride at his left side as shield
 on shoulder rides.

Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and
 board and bed
 Thy life is his — thy fate it is to guard him
 with thy head.

So thou must eat the White Queen's meat,
 and all her foes are thine,
 And thou must harry any father's hold for the
 peace of the Border-line, ⁸⁰

And thou must make a trooper tough and
 hack thy way to power —

Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when
 I am hanging in Peshawur."

They have looked each other between the
 eyes, and there they have found no
 fault;

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
 Blood on leavened bread and salt:

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
 Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod, ⁸⁵

On the hilt and haft of the Khyber knife,
 and the wondrous names of God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare and
 Kamal's boy the dun,

And two have come to Fort Bukloh where
 there went forth but one.

And when they drew to the Quarter-guard,
 full twenty swords flew clear —

There was not a man but carried his feud
 with the blood of the mountaineer. ⁹⁰

"Ha' done, Ha' done!" said the Colonel's
 son. "Put up the steel at your sides!"

Last night ye had struck at a Border thief —
 tonight 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and
 never the two shall meet,

Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
 God's great Judgment Seat;

But there is neither East nor West,
 Border, nor Breed, nor Birth, ⁹⁵

When two strong men stand face to face,
 tho' they come from the ends of the
 earth.

FUZZY-WUZZY

(SOUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)

We've fought with many men acrost the
 seas,

An' some of 'em was brave an' some was
 not:

The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
 But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.

We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im: ⁵
 'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our
 'orses,

'E cut our sentries up at Suakim,
 An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our
 forces.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your
 'ome in the Sowdan;

You're a poor benighted 'eathen, but a
 first-class fightin' man; ¹⁰

We gives you your certifikit, an' if you
 want it signed,

We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you
 whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Khyber hills,
 The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,

The Burman guv us Irriwaddy chills, ¹⁵
 An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style;

But all we ever got from such as they
 Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us
 swaller;

We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
 But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us
 'oller. ²⁰

Then 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the
 missis an' the kid,

Our orders was to break you, an' of
 course we went an' did.

We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it
 wasn't 'ardly fair;

But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy
 Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own, ²⁵
 'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,

So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
 In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords;

When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
 With 'is coffin-headed shield an' shovel-
 spear, ³⁰

A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
 Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your
 friends which is no more,

If we 'adn't lost some messmates we
 would 'elp you to deplore;

But give an' take 's the gospel, an' we'll
 call the bargain fair, ³⁵

For if you 'ave lost more than us, you
 crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke, when we let drive,
 An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our
 'ead;

'E's all 'ot sand an ginger when alive,
 An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
 'E's a daisy, 'e's a duck, 'e's a lamb! 41
 'E's a Injun-rubber idiot on the spree,
 'E's the on'y thing that doesn't care a clam
 For the Regiment o' British Infantee.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your
 'ome in the Sowdan; 45
 You're a pore benighted 'eathen, but a
 first-class fightin' man;
 An' 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with
 your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air —
 You big black boundin' beggar — for
 you bruk a British square.

GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin an' beer
 When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
 An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot
 it:
 But if it comes to slaughter,
 You will do your work on water, 5
 An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's
 got it.
 Now in Injia's sunny clime,
 Where I used to spend my time
 A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
 Of all them black-faced crew 10
 The finest man I knew
 Was our regimental Bhisti, Gunga Din,
 He was "Din! Din! Din!
 You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
 Hi! slippery hitherao! 15
 Water! Get it! Panee lao!
 You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
 Was nothin' much before,
 An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind; 20
 For a twisty piece o' rag
 An' a goatskin water-bag
 Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
 When the sweatin' troop-train lay
 In a sidin' through the day, 25
 Where the 'eat would make your bloomin'
 eyebrows crawl.
 We shouted "Harry By!"
 Till our throats were bricky-dry,
 Then we wopped 'in cause 'e couldn't serve
 us all.
 It was "Din! Din! Din! 30
 You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you
 been?
 You put some juldee in it,
 Or I'll marrow you this minute
 If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one 35
 Till the longest day was done,
 An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
 If we charged or broke or cut,
 You could bet your bloomin' nut,
 'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear. 40
 With 'is mussick on 'is back,
 'E would skip with our attack,
 An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire,"
 An' for all 'is dirty 'ide
 'E was white, clear white, inside, 45
 When 'e went to tend the wounded under
 fire!
 It was "Din! Din! Din!"
 With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the
 green.
 When the cartridges ran out,
 You could 'ear the front-files shout: 50
 "Hi! ammunition mules an' Gunga Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night
 When I dropped be'ind the fight
 With a bullet where my belt-plate should a'
 been.
 I was chokin' mad with thirst, 55
 An' the man that spied me first
 Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga
 Din.
 'E lifted up my 'ead,
 An' 'e guv me 'arf a pint o' water — green:
 It was crawlin' and it stunk, 60
 But of all the drinks I've drunk,
 I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.
 It was "Din! Din! Din!
 'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is
 spleen;
 'E's chawin' up the ground an' 'e's kickin' all
 around: 65
 For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!"

'E carried me away
 To where a dooli lay,
 An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
 'E put me safe inside, 70
 An' just before 'e died:
 "I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
 So I'll meet 'im later on
 In the place where 'e is gone —
 Where it's always double drill and no can-
 teen; 75
 'E'll be squattin' on the coals
 Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
 An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din.
 Din! Din! Din!
 You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din! 80
 Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
 By the livin' God that made you,
 You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.

L'ENVOI

When Earth's last picture is painted, and the
tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the
youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it —
lie down for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall
set us to work anew!

And those who were good shall be happy:
they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with
brushes of comet's hair;
They shall find real saints to draw from —
Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and
never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only
the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one
shall work for fame;
But each for the joy of the working, and
each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God
of Things as They Are!

RECESSIONAL

"Reverence is the master-key of knowledge."

God of our fathers, known of old —
Lord of our far-flung battle-line —

Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet
Lest we forget — lest we forget! 5

The tumult and the shouting dies —
The captains and the kings depart —
Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart. 10
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away —
On dune and headland sinks the fire —
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday 15
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in
awe — 20
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the Law —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust 25
In reeking tube and iron shard —
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard —
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord!
Amen. 30

ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN (1859—)

Housman was born in 1859, graduated from Oxford, and is at present Professor of Latin in Cambridge University. He won high recognition as a poet in 1896, with a small volume of poems, *A Shropshire Lad*. Not until 1924 did he publish any more verse, when another thin volume, *Last Poems*, appeared. The poems below are from *A Shropshire Lad*.

Housman's poems have a simplicity that defies analysis, a simplicity that we find in the best of Wordsworth and of Heine. They deal mainly with the life of Ludlow. They are at times pessimistic or fatalistic, but genial, always lyrical, with an evasive quality that is Housman's alone.

OH, WHEN I WAS IN LOVE
WITH YOU

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well did I behave.

And now the fancy passes by, 5
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again.

TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-
high.

To-day, the road all runners come, 5
Shoulder-high we bring you home.
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsmen of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
 From fields where glory does not stay, 10
 And early though the laurel grows
 It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
 Cannot see the record cut,
 And silence sounds no worse than cheers 15
 After earth has stopped the ears.

Now you will not swell the rout
 Of lads that wore their honors out,
 Runners whom renown outran
 And the name died before the man. 20

So set, before its echoes fade,
 The fleet foot on the sill of shade.
 And hold to the low lintel up
 The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head 25
 Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
 And find unwithered on its curls
 The garland briefer than a girl's.

WHITE IN THE MOON THE LONG ROAD LIES

White in the moon the long road lies,
 The moon stands blank above;
 White in the moon the long road lies
 That leads me from my love.

Still hangs the hedge without a gust, 5
 Still, still the shadows stay:
 My feet upon the moonlit dust
 Pursue the ceaseless way.

The world is round, so travellers tell,
 And straight though reach the track, 10
 Trudge on, trudge on, 'twill all be well,
 The way will guide one back.

But ere the circle homeward hies
 Far, far must it remove:
 White in the moon the long road lies 15
 That leads me from my love.

INTO MY HEART AN AIR THAT KILLS

Into my heart an air that kills
 From yon far country blows:
 What are those blue remembered hills,
 What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content, 5
 I see it shining plain,
 The happy highways where I went
 And cannot come again.

THINK NO MORE, LAD; LAUGH, BE JOLLY

Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly:
 Why should men make haste to die?
 Empty heads and tongues a-talking
 Make the rough road easy walking,
 And the feather pate of folly 5
 Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
 Spins the heavy world around.
 If young hearts were not so clever,
 Oh, they would be young for ever: 10
 Think no more; 'tis only thinking
 Lays lads underground.

WHEN I CAME LAST TO LUDLOW

When I came last to Ludlow
 Amidst the moonlight pale,
 Two friends kept step beside me,
 Two honest lads and hale.

Now Dick lies long in the churchyard, 5
 And Ned lies long in jail,
 And I come home to Ludlow
 Amidst the moonlight pale.

THE CARPENTER'S SON

"Here the hangman stops his cart:
 Now the best of friends must part.
 Fare you well, for ill fare I:
 Live, lads, and I will die.

"Oh, at home had I but stayed 5
 'Prenticed to my father's trade,
 Had I stuck to plane and adze
 I had not been lost, my lads.

"Then I might have built perhaps 10
 Gallows-trees for other chaps,
 Never dangled on my own,
 Had I but left ill alone.

"Now, you see, they hang me high,
 And the people passing by
 Stop to shake their fists and curse; 15
 So 'tis come from ill to worse.

"Here hang I, and right and left
Two poor fellows hang for theft:
All the same's the luck we prove,
Though the midmost hangs for love. 20

See my neck and save your own:
Comrades all, leave ill alone.

"Comrades all, that stand and gaze,
Walk henceforth in other ways;

"Make some day a decent end,
Shrewder fellows than your friend. 25
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die."

JOHN MASEFIELD (1874-)

John Masefield was born in 1874. He went to sea at fourteen, and later was a worker in a factory and a general assistant in a New York City barroom. These facts are not so important as the statement ascribed to him that on a Sunday afternoon, during his factory period, he read Chaucer and was inflamed with the desire to be a poet. Whether or not this statement is literally true, it is obvious that Masefield has been greatly influenced by Chaucer.

Masefield stands high among British poets, not only of to-day, but of all time. He writes in the old tradition, but achieves remarkable freshness and life within accepted forms like the sonnet and rime royal. Many of his lyrics, particularly those in *Salt Water Ballads*, have almost become classic. As a story-teller in verse he has few equals. Especially vivid and at the same time poetic are *The Widow in Bye Street*, *The Everlasting Mercy*, *Dauber*, *Daffodil Fields*, and *Reynard the Fox*. Masefield is also a playwright. His *Tragedy of Nan*, modern and severely realistic, has the intensity and restraint of a Greek play. Among his prose works may be mentioned *A Mainsail Haul* and *Gallipoli*. The latter, an account of the disastrous Dardanelles campaign during the Great War, in which Masefield describes how the British almost accomplished the impossible, rises to the heights of the medieval *Song of Roland* — with a quotation from which Masefield prefaces his book.

A CONSECRATION¹

Not of the princes and prelates with peri-
wigged charioteers

Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat
of the years, —

Rather the scorned — the rejected — the
men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which
fights till it dies,

Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din
and the cries, 5

The men with the broken heads and the
blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of
the throne,

Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles
are blown,

But the lads who carried the koppie and can-
not be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the
tramp of the road, 10

The slave with the sack on his shoulders
pricked on with the goad,

The man with too weighty a burden, too
weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man
with a clout,

The chantyman bent at the halliards putting
a tune to the shout,

The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired
lookout. 15

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth
and the mirth,

The portly presence of potentates goodly in
girth; —

Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and
scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the
gold;

Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of
mold. 20

Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in
the rain and the cold —

Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my
tales be told.

Amen.

CARGOES¹

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,

¹ From *Salt Water Ballads*. Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

¹ From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white
wine. 5

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the
Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-
green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moi-
dores. 10

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke
stack,
Butting through the Channel in the mad
March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays. 15

ROADWAYS¹

One road leads to London,
One road runs to Wales,
My road leads me seawards
To the white dipping sails.

One road leads to the river, 5
As it goes singing slow;
My road leads to shipping,
Where the bronzed sailors go.

Leads me, lures me, calls me
To salt green tossing sea; 10
A road without earth's road-dust
Is the right road for me.

A wet road heaving, shining,
And wild with seagulls' cries,
A mad salt sea-wind blowing 15
The salt spray in my eyes.

My road calls me, lures me
West, east, south, and north;
Most roads lead men homewards,
My road leads me forth 20

To add more miles to the tally
Of grey miles left behind,
In quest of that one beauty
God put me here to find.

THE WEST WIND¹

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds'
cries;

I never hear the west wind but tears are in
my eyes.

For it comes from the west lands, the old
brown hills,

And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as
tired as mine; 5

Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's
like wine.

There is cool green grass there, where men
may lie at rest;

And the thrushes are in song there, fluting
from the nest.

"Will you not come home, brother? You
have been long away.

It's April, and blossom time, and white is the
spray; 10

And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is
the rain;

Will you not come home, brother, home to us
again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where the
rabbits run;

It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm
rain and sun.

It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a
man's brain, 15

To hear the wild bees and see the merry
spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother,
above the green wheat,

So will you not come home, brother, and rest
your tired feet?

I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep
for aching eyes,"

Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of
birds' cries. 20

It's the white road westwards is the road that
I must tread

To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest
for heart and head,

To the violets and the brown brooks and the
thrushes' song

In the fine land, the west land, the land
where I belong.

¹ From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918,
by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

¹ From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918,
by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

SEA-FEVER¹

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely
 sea and the sky,
 And all I ask is a tall ship, and a star to steer
 her by,
 And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and
 the white sail's shaking,
 And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey
 dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of
 the running tide⁵
 Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be
 denied;
 And all I ask is a windy day with the white
 clouds flying,
 And the flung spray and the brown spume,
 and the sea-gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again to the vagrant
 gypsy life,
 To the gull's way and the whale's way where
 the wind's like a whetted knife;¹⁰
 And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing
 fellow-rover,
 And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the
 long trick's over.

ON GROWING OLD²

Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying;
 My dog and I are old, too old for roving.
 Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift
 flying,
 Is soon too lame to march, too cold for
 loving.

¹ From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918,
 by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

² From *Enslaved*. Copyright, 1920, by The Macmillan
 Company. Reprinted by permission.

I take the book and gather to the fire,⁵
 Turning old yellow leaves; minute by min-
 ute
 The clock ticks to my heart; a withered
 wire
 Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet.

I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander
 Your cornland nor your hill-land nor your
 valleys¹⁰
 Ever again, nor share the battle yonder
 Where the young knight the broken squadron
 rallies;

Only stay quiet, while my mind remem-
 bers
 The beauty of fire from the beauty of em-
 bers.

Beauty, have pity, for the strong have
 power,¹⁵
 The rich their wealth, the beautiful their
 grace,
 Summer of man its sunlight and its flower,
 Springtime of man all April in a face.

Only, as in the jostling in the Strand,
 Where the mob thrusts or loiters or is
 loud,²⁰
 The beggar with the saucer in his hand
 Asks only a penny from the passing crowd,

So, from this glittering world with all its
 fashion,
 Its fire and play of men, its stir, its march,
 Let me have wisdom, Beauty, wisdom and
 passion,²⁵
 Bread to the soul, rain where the summers
 parch.

Give me but these, and though the darkness
 close
 Even the night will blossom as the rose.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865-)

Yeats has been the foremost figure in the remarkable literary renaissance which has accompanied the national aspirations of Ireland during the last generation. He is essentially a poet, a mystic who firmly believes that truth may be reached through beauty, that the imagination and faith are more powerful than reason. Other Irish writers may surpass Yeats in special fields. Yeats, however, like his compatriot, Goldsmith, has touched nothing that he did not adorn. In 1901, with Lady Gregory, he instituted the Irish National Theater at the Abbey Theater, in Dublin. This gave impulse and direction to many Irish dramatists, notably Synge. Besides his plays and poems, Yeats has done splendid work in collecting and retelling the ancient legends of Ireland.

The complete works of Yeats are published by Macmillan. A good survey of modern Irish literature may be found in Lloyd Morris, *The Celtic Dawn* (Macmillan).

WHEN YOU ARE OLD¹

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows
deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or
true;

But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

THE VOICE¹

The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away.
While the faeries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur
and sing

Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
"When the wind has laughed and murmured
and sung

The lonely of heart is withered away!"

THE SONG OF THE HAPPY
SHEPHERD¹

The woods of Arcady are dead,
And over is their antique joy;
Of old the world on dreaming fed;
Gray Truth is now her painted toy;
Yet still she turns her restless head:
But O, sick children of the world,
Of all the many changing things
In dreary dancing past us whirled,
To the cracked tune that Chronos sings,
Words alone are certain good.
Where are now the warring kings,
Word be-mockers? — By the Rood
Where are now the warring kings?
An idle word is now their glory,
By the stammering schoolboy said,
Reading some entangled story:
The kings of the old time are fled
The wandering earth herself may be

¹ From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1906, by
The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Only a sudden flaming word
In clanging space a moment heard,
Troubling the endless reverie.

Then nowise worship dusty deeds,
Nor seek; for this is also sooth;
To hunger fiercely after truth,
Lest all thy toiling only breeds
New dreams, new dreams; there is no truth
Saving in thine own heart. Seek, then,
No learning from the starry men,
Who follow with the optic glass
The whirling ways of stars that pass —
Seek, then, for this is also sooth,
No word of theirs — the cold star-bane
Has cloven and rent their hearts in twain,
And dead is all their human truth.

Go gather by the humming-sea
Some twisted, echo-harboring shell,
And to its lips thy story tell,
And they thy comforters will be,
Rewarding in melodious guile,
Thy fretful words a little while,
Till they shall singing fade in ruth,
And die a pearly brotherhood;
For words alone are certain good:
Sing, then, for this is also sooth.
I must be gone: there is no grave
Where daffodil and lily wave,
And I would please the hapless faun,
Buried under the sleepy ground,
With mirthful songs before the dawn.
His shouting days with mirth were crowned;
And still I dream he treads the lawn,
Walking ghostly in the dew,
Pierced by my glad singing through,
My songs of old earth's dreamy youth:
But ah! she dreams not now; dream thou!
For fair are poppies on the brow:
Dream, dream, for this is also sooth.

THE FALLING OF THE
LEAVES¹

Autumn is over the long leaves that love us,
And over the mice in the barley sheaves;
Yellow the leaves of the rowan above us,
And yellow the wet wild-strawberry leaves.

The hour of the waning of love has beset
us,
And weary and worn are our sad souls now;
Let us part, ere the season of passion forget
us,
With a kiss and a tear on thy drooping brow.

¹ From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1906, by
The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

INDEXES

INDEX TO THE MAP

These places are named on the map printed as the frontispiece. The letters (e.g., Ca) correspond with those in the margin of the map, and indicate the blocks formed by meridians and parallels within which the places are included.

Abbotsford, Ca.	Cooper's Hill, Dc.	Harwich, Ec.	Naseby, Db.	Solway Firth, Ca.
Aldborough, Eb.	Cornwall, Bc.	Hastings, Ec.	Naze, The, Ec.	Somersers, Eb.
Alderney, Cd.	Coventry, Db.	Hawarden, Cb.	Nen River, Db.	Somerset, Cc.
Allington, Ec.	Coxwold, Da.	Hawkeshead, Ca.	Nether Stowey, Cc.	South Downs, Dc.
Alloway Kirk, Ba.	Craigputtock, Ca.	Haworth, Db.	Newark, Db.	Southampton, Dc.
Amesbury, Dc.	Cumberland, Ca.	Hawthornden, Ca.	Newcastle, Da.	Stafford, Cb.
Anglesey, Bb.	Cumbrian Mts., Ca.	Helvellyn Mount, Ca.	New Forest, Dc.	Stafford Bridge, Db.
Anion River, Dc.		Hereford, Cb.	New Radnor, Cb.	Start Point, Cc.
Annan, Ca.	Dartmoor, Cc.	Hertford, Dc.	Newstead Abbey, Db.	Stillington, Da.
Appleby, Ca.	Dartmouth, Cc.	Hipswell, Da.	Newton, Cc.	Stoke Poges, Dc.
Arran, Island of, Ba.	Dean, Forest of, Cc.	Hitchin, Dc.	Nith River, Ca.	Stonehenge, Dc.
Auchinleck, Ba.	Dean Prior, Cc.	Holyhead, Bb.	Norfolk, Eb.	Stour River, Cc.
Avon River, Cb.	Dee River, Cb.	Horsham, Dc.	Northallerton, Da.	Strait of Dover, Ec.
Ayr, Ba.	Denbigh, Cb.	Horton, Dc.	Northampton, Db.	Stratford on Avon, Db.
	Deptford, Ec.	Hull, Db.	North Channel, Ba.	Strawberry Hill, Dc.
Banbury, Db.	Derby, Db.	Humber River, Dc.	North Downs, Dc.	Suffolk, Eb.
Bangor, Bb.	Derwen River, Db.	Huntingdon, Db.	North Foreland, Ec.	Surrey, Dc.
Bardsey Island, Bb.	Derwent Water, Ca.	Hursley, Dc.	Northumberland, Ca.	Sussex, Dc-Ec.
Barnstaple, Bc.	Devon, Bc-Cc.		Da.	Sutton, Da.
Barnstaple Bay, Bc.	Dolgelly, Cb.	Ilington, Cc.	North York Moors, Da.	Sutton Gold Field, Db.
Bath, Cc.	Don River, Db.	Ipswich, Eb.	Norwich, Eb.	Swale River, Da.
Battle Abbey, Ec.	Doon River, Ba.	Irish Sea, Bb.	Nottingham, Db.	Swansea, Cc.
Beachey Head, Ec.	Dorchester, Cc.	Island of Bute, Aa.	Nuneaton, Db.	Swineshead Abbey, Db.
Beaconsfield, Dc.	Dorset, Cc.	Islay, Aa.		
Bedford, Db.	Douglas, I. of Man, Ba.	Isle of Man, Ba.	Olney, Db.	Taff River, Cc.
Bemerton, Dc.	Dover, Ec.	Isle of Wight, Dc.	Ouse River, (Norfolk) Eb.	Tamar River, Bc.
Berkshire, Dc.	Dryburgh Abbey, Ca.		Ouse R. (Yorkshire), Db.	Taunton, Cc.
Berwick-upon-Tweed, Ca.	Dublin, Ab.	Jarrow, Da.	Ottery, Cc.	Tavistock, Bc.
	Dulwich, Dc.	Jersey, Cd.	Oxford, Dc.	Taw River, Bc-Cc.
Bideford, Bc.	Dumfries, Ca.	Jura, Aa-Ba.		Tees River, Da.
Bilton, Dc.	Dunwich, Eb.			Teifi River, Bb.
Binfield, Dc.	Durham, Da.	Kenilworth, Db.	Paston, Eb.	Teign River, Cb.
Birkenhead, Cb.		Keswick, Ca.	Peak, The, Db.	Tewkesbury, Cc.
Birmingham, Db.	Ecclefechan, Ca.	Kilmarnock, Ba.	Pembroke, Bc.	Thames River, Ec.
Blyth, Da.	Eddystone Light House, Bc.	Kings Lynn, Eb.	Pennine Range, Ca.	Tintagel, Bc.
Boston, Db.	Edinburgh, Ca.	Kintyre, Ba.	Penshurst, Ec.	Tintern Abbey, Cc.
Bosworth Field, Db.	Ednam, Ca.	Kirkcudbright, Ba.	Penzance, Bc.	Tone River, Cc.
Bournemouth, Dc.	Egdon Heath, Cc.	Kirkby Wiske, Da.	Peterborough, Db.	Towy River, Cb.
Bradford, Dc.	Elstow, Db.	Knutsford, Cb.	Petersfield, Dc.	Trent River, Db.
Braich-y-Pwll, Bb.	Elvington, Db.		Pevensey, Ec.	Tunbridge Wells, Ec.
Brantwood, Ca.	Ely, Eb.	Lammermoor Hills, Ca.	Plymouth, Cb.	Tweed River, Ca.
Brecknock, Cbc.	Ernley, Cb.	Lancashire, Cb.	Portland Bill, Cc.	Twickenham, Dc.
Brecon, Cc.	Essex, Ec.	Lancaster, Ca.	Portsmouth, Dc.	Twyford, Dc.
Bridgewater, Cc.	Eton, Dc.	Land's End, Bc.		Tyne River, Ca.
Brighton, Dc.	Ettrick, Ca.	Landport, Dc.	Quantock Hills, Cc.	Tynemouth, Da.
Bristol, Cc.	Eversley, Dc.	Leeds, Db.		
Bristol Channel, Cc.	Exeter, Cc.	Leicester, Db.	Radnor, Cb.	Ullswater, Ca.
Brue River, Cc.	Exmoor, Bc-Cc.	Lichfield, Db.	Reading, Cb.	Ure River, Da.
Brunne, Db.		Ligger or Perran Bay, Bc.	Richmond, Dc.	Usk River, Cc.
Buckhurst, Dc.	Falmouth, Bc.		Rochester, Ec.	
Buckingham, Dc.	Farne Islands, Da.	Lincoln, Db.	Rothley Temple, Db.	Wakefield, Db.
Budleigh, Cc.	Farringford, Dc.	Lindisfarne, Da.	Rugby, Db.	Walsingham, Eb.
Bursley, Dc.	Firth of Clyde, Ba.	Littlemore, Dc.	Runnimead, Dc.	Waltham Abbey, Ec.
Bury St. Edmunds, Eb.	Flamborough Head, Da.	Liverpool, Cb.	Rutland, Db.	Wantage, Dc.
Bute, Ba.	Flint, Cb.	Lizard Point, Bd.	Rydal Mount, Ca.	Ware, Ec.
	Flodden Field, Da.	London, Dc.	Ryeland, Dc.	Warkworth Castle, Da.
Cader Idris, Cb.	Forest of Dean, Cc.	Louth, Db.		Warwick, Db.
Caerleon, Cc.	Formby Point, Cb.	Lowestoft, Eb.	Saffron Walden, Ec.	Wash, The, Eb.
Caernarvon, Bc.		Ludlow, Cb.	St. Albans, Cb.	Wareny River, Eb.
Caernarvon, Bb.	Gadshill, Ec.	Lundy Island, Bc.	St. Asaph, Cb.	Waverley, Dc.
Cam River, Eb.	Glamorgan, Cc.	Lutterworth, Db.	St. Bees Head, Ca.	Wear River, Da.
Cambridge, Eb.	Glasgow, Ba.		St. David's Head, Bc.	Welland River, Db.
Camelford, Bc.	Glastonbury, Cc.	Maidstone, Ec.	St. George's Channel, Bb.	Wells Next the Sea, Eb.
Canterbury, Ec.	Gloucester, Cc.	Maldon, Ec.	Salisbury, Dc.	West Moreland, Ca.
Cardiff, Cc.	Goodrich Castle, Cc.	Malmesbury, Cc.	Sark, Cd.	Westbury, Cc.
Cardigan, Bb.	Grasmere, Ca.	Malvern Hills, Cb.	Scarborough, Da.	Wey River, Dc.
Cardigan Bay, Bb.	Great Grimby, Db.	Man, Isle of, Ba.	Sea Fell, Ca.	Whitby, Da.
Carisbrooke, Dc.	Great Marlow, Dc.	Manchester, Cb.	Selborne, Dc.	Wight, Isle of, Dc.
Carlisle, Ca.	Great Yarmouth, Eb.	Medway River, Ec.	Selkirk, Ca.	Wilton, Dc.
Castlet'n, I. of Man, Ba.	Greenwich, Dc.	Melrose Abbey, Ca.	Selsey Bill, Dc.	Wiltshire, Dc.
Chalfont St. Giles, Dc.	Gretna Green, Ca.	Menai Strait, Bb.	Severn, The, Cc.	Winchester, Dc.
Channel Islands, Cd.	Guernsey, Cd.	Merioneth, Cb.	Sharpham Park, Cc.	Windermere, Ca.
Chelmsford, Ec.	Guildford, Dc.	Mersey River, Cb.	Sheffield, Db.	Windor, Dc.
Chertsey, Dc.		Middlesex, Dc.	Sherwood Forest, Db.	Winstead, Db.
Chester, Cb.	Halifax, Db.	Milford Haven, Bc.	Shrewsbury, Cb.	Witham River, Db.
Cheviot Hills, Ca.	Hampole, Db.	Monkwearmouth, Da.	Shropshire, Cb.	Wolds, The, Db.
Chichester, Dc.	Hampshire, Dc.	Monmouth, Cc.	Sittingbourne, Ec.	Woodstock, Dc.
Cleobury Mortimer, Cb.	Harrow, Dc.	Montgomery, Cb.	Skiddaw Mount, Ca.	Worcester, Cc.
Clevedon, Cc.	Hartland Point, Bc.	Moor Park, Dc.	Snafell, Ba.	Wye River, Cb.
Clovelly, Bc.	Hartlepool, Da.	Morecambe Bay, Cb.	Snowdon, mountain, Bb.	Yarrow River, Ca.
Clyde River, Ba.		Mounts Bay, Bc.	Solent, The, Dc.	York, Cc, Db.
Cockermouth, Ca.		Mull of Galloway, Ba.		---

INDEX

OF AUTHORS, TITLES, AND FIRST LINES OF POETRY

Authors' names are printed in capitals and small capitals; the titles of both poetry and prose selections, in italic type; and the first lines of the poetry selections, in roman type.

- A band of military officers, 697
A Certain People, 1323
 A shaded lamp and a waving blind, 1334
 A Sonnet is a moment's monument, 1261
 A spirit seems to pass, 1334
 A thing of beauty is a joy for ever, 832
 A wanderer is man from his birth, 1175
Across the Plains (essays from), 1304-12
Adonais, 819-28
After the Club-Dance, 1336
After the Fair, 1337
 Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh, 771
 Ah, did you once see Shelley plain, 1107
 Ah, what avails the sceptred race, 855
 "Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight," 844
All is Well, 1242
 All June I bound the rose in sheaves, 1106
 All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair, 749
An August Midnight, 1334
 And are ye one of Hermitage, 1336
 And in the frosty season, when the sun, 697
Andrea Del Sarto, 1122-25
Apologia Pro Vita Sua (excerpt from), 1039-44
Apology, An, 1271
Applications, 998-1001
Aristocracies, 975-80
 ARNOLD, MATTHEW, 1166-1215
 As Puritans they prominently wax, 1323
 As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay, 1240
At Casterbridge Fair, 1335
 At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay, 1092
 At Francis Allen's on the Christmas eve, 1066
At the Grave of Burns, 704
 At the midnight in the silence of the sleeptime, 1126
Atalanta in Calydon (choruses from), 1274
Autobiography (Huxley), 1215-20
 Autumn is over the long leaves that love us, 1346
 Bacon, Francis, 1026-38
Ballad of Burdens, A, 1277-79
Ballad of Dead Ladies, The, 1259
Ballad of East and West, A, 1337-39
Ballad of François Villon, A, 1284
Ballad-Singer, The, 1335
 Bards of Passion and of Mirth, 841
 Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying, 1345
 Before the beginning of years, 1274
 Behold her, single in the field, 705
 Beneath the shadow of dawn's aerial cope, 1285
Biographia Literaria, 749-66
 Bird of the bitter bright gray golden morn, 1284
Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church, The, 1101-03
 Black'on frowns east on Maidon, 1336
Blessed Damozel, The, 1255
Boat Song, 768
Bonny Dundee, 771
Boot and Saddle, 1098
 Boot, saddle, to horse, and away! 1098
Bossuet and the Duchess De Fontanges, 862
Botticelli, Sandro, 1287-91
Break, Break, Break, 1076
Bridge of Sighs, The, 869
 Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art, 854
Brignall Banks, 769
 Bring the bowl which you boast, 772
 BRONTE, EMILY, 1247
 Brook and road were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass, 690
 BROWNING, ELIZABETH BARRETT, 1243-46
 BROWNING, ROBERT, 1096-1126
Buried Life, The, 1173
 Bursts from a rending East in flaws, 1324
 Bury the Great Duke, 1084
 But do not let us quarrel any more, 1122
 But, knowing now that they would have her speak, 1264
 By this he knew she wept with waking eyes, 1322
 BYRON, LORD, 773-811
 Cargoes, 1343
 CARLYLE, THOMAS, 947-80
Carpenter's Son, The, 1342
Cavalier Tunes, 1097
Centre of Indifference, The, 951-56
Character of the Happy Warrior, 708
Character of the Late Elia, A, 897-99
Charge of the Light Brigade, The, 1087
Child in the House, The, 1291-98
Child's Future, A, 1285
Child Harold's Pilgrimage (selections from), 775-93
 "Child Roland to the Dark Tower Came," 1114-17
Childhood and School-Time, 697
Choice, The, 1261
Choric Song, 1064-66
Choruses from Atalanta in Calydon, 1274

- Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*, 872-78
Christabel, 740-47
Christmas Ghost-Story, A, 1335
Christmas Sermon, A, 1312-16
City of Dreadful Night, *The* (excerpt from), 1317
Clarion, 770
Cloud Confines, *The*, 1263
Cloud, *The*, 816
CLOUGH, ARTHUR HUGH, 1239-42
Coldly, sadly descends, 1181
COLERIDGE, SAMUEL TAYLOR, 729-66
Come, dear children, let us away, 1167
Come into the garden, Maud, 1088
Composed by the Seaside Near Calais, 702
Composed Upon An Evening of Extraordinary Splendor and Beauty, 717
Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, 702
Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn, 1072
Consecration, A, 1343
Coronach, 769
County Guy, 771
"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land, 1064
Crossing the Bar, 1096
Cry of the Children, *The*, 1244-46
Culture and Anarchy (excerpt from), 1198-1206

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave, 1107
Dear, had the world in its caprice, 1106
Death Bed, *The*, 871
Defense of Guenevere, 1264-69
Dejection: An Ode, 747-49
Democracy, 969-75
DE QUINCEY, THOMAS, 926-42
Destruction of Sennacherib, *The*, 774
Dipsychus (excerpt from), 1239
Dirge, A, 831
Dissertation Upon Roast Pig, A, 887-90
Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers, 1244
Don Juan (selections from), 805-10
Dover Beach, 1181
Dream Children: A Reverie, 885-87
Dream-Fugue, 939-42

Earth has not anything to show more fair, 702
Earthly Paradise, *The*, *L'Envoi* to, 1272
Earthly Paradise, *The* *Prologue* to, 1271
Eat thou and drink; tomorrow thou shalt die, 1261
Elegiac Stanzas, 706
Embarcation, 1334
Empedocles On Etna (song from), 1168-72
Empedocles' Song, 1168-72
Empress Catharine and Princess Dashkof, 866
Endymion (Proem to Book I), 832
English Mail Coach, *The*, 930-42
Envoy, 1321
Epic, *The*, 1066
Epilogue, 1126
Essay on Wordsworth, 1206-15
Essays in Criticism (selected), 1183-98

Essays of Elia, 872-99
Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind! 793
Eve of Crecy, *The*, 1269
Eve of St. Agnes, *The*, 835-40
Ever let the Fancy roam, 834
Everlasting No, *The*, 948-51
Everlasting Yea, *The*, 956-61
Expostulation and Reply, 686

Fair star of evening, Splendor of the west, 702
Falling of the Leaves, *The*, 1346
Fame (two sonnets by Keats), 844
Fame, like a wayward Girl, will still be coy, 844
Fancy, 834
Farewell to Essay-Writing, A, 922-26
Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat, 1125
Fiesolan Idyl, A, 855
Fight, *The*, 914-22
FITZGERALD, EDWARD, 1248-54
Five years have passed; five summers, with the length, 687
Former Beauties, 1336
Fors Clavigera (letter from), 1159-65
Forsaken Merman, *The*, 1167
Fra Lippo Lippi, 1117-22
France, 699
Francis Bacon, 1026-38
Fresh morning gusts have blown away all fear, 845
From low to high doth dissolution climb, 718
Frost at Midnight, 739
Function of Criticism at the Present Time, 1185-98
Future, *The*, 1175
Fuzzy-Wuzzy, 1339

Garden of Proserpine, *The*, 1279
Give a Rouse, 1097
Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill, 1176
Go, songs, for ended is our brief, sweet play, 1321
God of our fathers, known of old, 1341
Gold on her head, and gold on her feet, 1269
GORDON, GEORGE, LORD BYRON, 773-811
Gossip on Romance, A, 1299-1304
Grammarians' Funeral, A, 1109
Gr-r-r — there go, my heart's abhorrence! 1099
Guardian-Angel, *The*, 1107
Gunga Din, 1340

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare, 1104
Had she come all the way for this, 1269
Had this effulgence disappeared, 717
Hail to the chief who in triumph advances! 768
Hail to thee, blithe Spirit! 817
Half a league, half a league, 1087
Hard Weather, 1324
HARDY, THOMAS, 1333-37
Harp of the North! that moldering long hast hung, 767
Haystack in the Floods, *The*, 1269-71
HAZLITT, WILLIAM, 899-926

- He found her by the ocean's moaning verge,
1322
He is gone on the mountain, 769
He stood alone within the spacious square, 1317
Heart of Midlothian, The (song from), 771
Heavenborn Helen, Sparta's queen, 1260
Hellas, The Final Chorus From, 828-30
Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, 860
Her Dilemma, 1333
Her Initials, 1333
Here are we for the last time face to face, 1272
"Here the hangman stops his cart," 1342
Here, where precipitate Spring with one light
bound, 855
Here, where the world is quiet, 1279
Here, where Vespasian's legions struck the
sands, 1334
Here's a Health to King Charles, 772
Hertha, 1280-82
High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
713
Higher Pantheism, The, 1092
Home-Thoughts, from Abroad, 1101
HOOD, THOMAS, 869-71
Hope and Fear, 1285
Hope Evermore and Believe, 1240
Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en as
thy thought, 1240
Hound of Heaven, The, 1319-21
House of Life, The (sonnets from), 1261-63
HOUSMAN, ALFRED EDWARD, 1341-43
How do I love thee? Let me count the ways,
1244
HUXLEY, THOMAS HENRY, 1215-39
Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, 812
Hymn to Proserpine, 1275-77
- I am poor brother Lippo, by your leave! 1117
I am that which began, 1280
I arise from dreams of Thee, 815
I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
816
I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house, 1060
I fled Him, down the nights and down the days,
1319
I have lived long enough, having seen one thing,
that love hath an end, 1275
I heard a thousand blended notes, 685
I held it truth, with him who sings, 1078
I lived with visions for my company, 1244
I met a traveler from an antique land, 813
I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely
sea and the sky, 1345
I said — Then, dearest, since 'tis so, 1108
"I Said to Love," 1335
I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold, 704
I strove with none, for none was worth my strife,
856
I thought once how Theocritus had sung, 1243
I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, 706
I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile! 706
I weep for Adonais — he is dead! 820
Idea of a University, The, 1044-53
If from the public way you turn your steps, 691
If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange, 1244
- If love were what the rose is, 1277
If thou must love me, let it be for nought,
1243
Imaginary Conversations (selections from), 856-69
Imperfect Sympathies, 882-85
In a drear-nighted December, 833
In a London Square, 1242
In Memoriam A.H.H., 1078-84
In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers, 891-94
In the endless nights, from my bed, where sleep-
less in anguish I lie, 1316
In this lone, open glade I lie, 1174
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan, 730
Indian Serenade, The, 815
Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood, 703
Inquiry, The, 1336
Inside of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, 718
Into My Heart An Air That Kills, 1342
Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child! 775
Isolation, 1180
It ended, and the morrow brought the task,
1322
It Is A Beauteous Evening Calm and Free, 702
It is an ancient Mariner, 731
It little profits that an idle king, 1071
Itle Domum Saturæ, Venit Hesperus, 1241
It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds
cries, 1344
- Jock of Hazeldean*, 770
Just for a handful of silver he left us, 1100
- KEATS, JOHN, 831-54
Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King, 1097
King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
1097
KIPLING, RUDYARD, 1337-41
Kubla Khan; or, A Vision in a Dream, 730
- La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, 844
Lady of Shalott, The, 1055-57
Lady of the Lake, The (excerpt from), 767, 768,
769
Lady of the Lake, The, Prologue to, 767
LAMB, CHARLES, 872-99
Lamia, 845-54
LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE, 854-69
Lantern-Bearers, The, 1304-09
Laodamia, 714-17
Last Lines, 1247
Last Ride Together, The, 1108
Latest Decalogue, The, 1240
Lausanne, 1334
Lay Sermons (essays from), 1220-39
Leofric and Godiva, 857
Let Taylor preach upon a morning breezy, 871
Let us begin and carry up this corpse, 1109
L'Envoi, 1341
L'Envoi to The Earthly Paradise, 1272
Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow, 927-30
Liberal Education, and Where to Find It, A,
1227-30
Liberal Knowledge Its Own End, 1044-53
Life is Struggle, 1242

Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet,
1173
*Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Ab-
bey*, 687
Lines On the Mermaid Tavern, 834
Lines: When the Lamp is Shattered, 830
Lines Written in Early Spring, 685
Lines Written in Kensington Gardens, 1174
Lochinvar, 766
Locksley Hall, 1071-76
London, 1802, 703
Look in my face: My name is Might-have-been,
1262
Lost Days, 1262
Lost Leader, The, 1100
Lotos-Eaters, The, 1064-66
Love among the Ruins, 1103
Love in the Valley, 1329-32
Love-Sight, 1261
Lucifer in Starlight, 1323
Lucy, 688
Lucy Gray, 690
Lullaby of an Infant Chief, 770
Lyrical Ballads, Preface to, 718-29
Lyrics from Maud, 1088-90

MACAULAY, THOMAS BABINGTON, 1001-38
Marcellus and Hannibal, 856
Marching Along, 1097
Market-Girl, The, 1336
Marmion (excerpt from), 766
MASEFIELD, JOHN, 1343-45
Match, A, 1277
Mater Tenebrarum, 1316
Maud, Lyrics from, 1088-90
Mazeppa, 797-805
Meeting at Night, 1100
Memorabilia, 1107
Memories and Portraits (essay from), 1299-1304
MEREDITH, GEORGE, 1321-32
Michael, 691-96
MILL, JOHN STUART, 981-1001
Milton, (Tennyson) 1090
Milton, (Macaulay) 1002-26
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour,
703
Modern Love (sonnets from), 1322
Morality, 1173
Morning Meditations, 871
MORRIS, WILLIAM, 1264-73
Morte D'Arthur, 1067-71
Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist, 878-81
Much have I travelled in the realms of gold, 832
Mutability, (Wordsworth) 718
Mutability, (Shelley) 819
My boat is on the shore, 797
My First Acquaintance with Poets, 900-09
My first thought was, he lied in every word,
1114
My hair is gray, but not with years, 793
My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains,
842
My Heart Leaps Up, 699
My heart leaps up when I behold, 699
My Last Duchess, 1098

Natural Supernaturalism, 961-65
Nature of Gothic, The, 1127-52
Near Dover, September, 1802, 703
NEWMAN, JOHN HENRY, 1039-53
No coward soul is mine, 1247
No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist, 843
No! those days are gone away, 833
Nobody took any notice of her as she stood on
the causey kerb, 1336
Northern Farmer, Old Style, 1090
Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged
charioteers, 1343

O blithe New-comer! I have heard, 700
O, Brignall banks are wild and fair, 769
O Friend! I know not which way I must look,
703
O hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
770
O Life with the sad seared face, 1335
O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies, 1090
O only Source of all our light and life, 1241
O pleasant exercise of hope and joy! 699
O soft embalmer of the still midnight, 845
O that 'twere possible, 1089
O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's
being, 814
O, Young Lochinvar is come out of the west, 766
Ode (Keats), 841
Ode on a Grecian Urn, 841
Ode on Intimations of Immortality, 710-12
Ode on Melancholy, 843
Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington, 1084-
87
Ode to a Nightingale, 842
Ode to Duty, 707
Ode to the Comic Spirit, 1325-29
Ode to the West Wind, 814
Enone, 1057-60
Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing, 1271
*Of Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-
Being*, 990-96
Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion, 983-90
*Of the Limits to the Authority of Society over the
Individual*, 996-98
Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray, 690
Often rebuked, yet always back returning, 1247
Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never
the twain shall meet, 1337
Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!
1105
Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story, 810
Oh, to be in England, 1101
Oh, When I was in Love with You, 1341
Old Morality (motto from), 770
Old Stic, The, 1247
On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose, 1323
On either side the river lie, 1055
On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer, 832
On Going a Journey, 909-14
On Growing Old, 1345
On His Seventy-Fifth Birthday, 856
On Liberty, 981-1001
*On the Advisableness of Improving Natural
Knowledge*, 1220-27

- On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot*, 1284
On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic, 702
On the Physical Basis of Life, 1230-39
On This Day I Complete My Thirty-Sixth Year, 810
 Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee, 702
One Hope, The, 1263
 One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee, 1166
 One more Unfortunate, 869
 One road leads to London, 1344
One Way of Love, 1106
 One word is too often profaned, 830
 Others abide our question. Thou art free, 1166
Ozymandias, 813

Palace of Art, The, 1060-64
Parting at Morning, 1101
Past and Present, 965-80
 PATER, WALTER, 1285-98
Pibroch of Donald Dhu, 770
Pippa Passes (song from), 1097
Pippa's Song, 1097
Poet, The, 1054
Poor Relations, 894-97
Preface to Essays in Criticism, 1183-85
Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 718-29
Prelude, The (extracts from), 696-99
Princess, The (songs from), 1076
Prisoner of Chillon, The, 793-97
Prologue to The Earthly Paradise, 1271
Prometheus Unbound (selections from), 815
Prospice, 1125
Proud Maisie, 771
Proud Maisie is in the wood, 771
Pulvis et Umbra, 1309-12
 Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane, 1242

Qua Cursum Ventus, 1240
Quentin Durward (song from), 771
Qui Laborat, Orat, 1241
Quiet Work, 1166
Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir, 1343

Recessional, 1341
Requiescat, 1176
Residence in France, 697
Resolution and Independence, 700-02
Respectability, 1106
Revenge, The, 1092-94
Revulsion, 1333
Reward, 966-69
 Riches I hold in light esteem, 1247
Rime of the Ancient Mariner, The, 731-39
Rizpah, 1094-96
Roadways, 1344
Robin Hood, 833
Rokeby (excerpt from), 769
Rome, 1334
Roots of Honor, The, 1152-59
Rose Aylmer, 855
 ROSSETTI, DANTE GABRIEL, 1254-63
 Rough wind, that moanest loud, 831
 Round the cape of a sudden came the sea, 1101

Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám of Naishápúr, 1248-54
Rugby Chapel, 1181-83
 RUSKIN, JOHN, 1126-65

Salt Water Ballads (poem from), 1343
Sandro Botticelli, 1287-91
Sartor Resartus (extracts from), 948-65
Say Not the Struggle Nought Availeth, 1239
Scholar-Gipsy, The, 1176-80
 SCOTT, SIR WALTER, 766-73
Sea-Fever, 1345
 Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, 843
Self-Dependence, 1172
 Send but a song oversea for us, 1282
Shakespeare, 1166
She Walks in Beauty, 774
 She walks in beauty, like the night, 774
She was a Phantom of Delight, 705
 SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE, 811-31
Silent Noon, 1261
Simplon Pass, The, 690
 Sing, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune, 1335
Sister Helen, 1256-59
 Small, busy flames play through the fresh laid coals, 832
 So all day long the noise of battle rolled, 1067
So We'll Go no More a Roving, 797
Soldier, Rest! Thy Warfare O'er, 768
Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister, 1099
Solitary Reaper, The, 705
Solitude (or, Lucy Gray), 690
Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, 713
Song of the Happy Shepherd, The, 1346
Song of the Shirt, The, 870
Songs from The Princess, 1076
Sonnet — "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art" — (Keats), 854
Sonnet on Chillon, 793
Sonnet on First Looking into Chapman's Homer, 832
Sonnet, The (Rossetti), 1261
Sonnet: To a Young Lady who sent Me a Laurel Crown, 845
Sonnets from the Portuguese, 1243-44
 Souls of Poets dead and gone, 834
 Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife! 770
 South of the Line, inland from far Durban, 1335
 St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was! 835
Stanzas (Bronte), 1247
Stanzas (Keats), 833
Stanzas for Music, 775
Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples, 813
Stanzas Written on the Road between Florence and Pisa, 810
Statue and the Bust, The, 1110-14
Slave of Roving Tim, A, 1323
 Stern Daughter of the Voice of God! 707
 STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS, 1298-1316
Stones of Venice, The (excerpt from), 1127-52
Story of a Round-House, The (poems from), 1343-45
 Strew on her roses, roses, 1176
 Strange fits of passion have I known, 688-90

- Studies in the History of the Renaissance*
(excerpts from), 1286-91
Sunday at Hampstead (excerpt from), 1317
Sunset and evening star, 1096
Superscription, A, 1262
Suspiria de Profundis (essay from), 927-30
Sweet and low, sweet and low, 1076
Sweetness and Light, 1198-1206
Swiftly walk o'er the western wane, 819
SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES, 1273-85
Switzerland (poem from), 1180
Sword of Common Sense! 1325
- Tables Turned, The*, 686
Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense, 718
Tell me now in what hidden way is, 1259
TENNYSON, ALFRED, 1053-96
That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
1098
The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
774
The awful shadow of some unseen Power, 812
The blessed damozel leaned out, 1255
The burden of fair women. Vain delight, 1277
The day is dark and the night, 1263
The flower that smiles today, 819
The Frost performs its secret ministry, 739
The gray sea and the long black land, 1100
The lost days of my life until today, 1262
The outspread world to span, 1168
The poet in a golden clime was born, 1054
The sea is calm tonight, 1181
The singers are gone from the Cornmarket-
place, 1337
The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow,
1241
The sun is warm, the sky is clear, 813
The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills,
and the plains, 1092
The time you won your town the race, 1341
The two were silent in a sunless church, 1333
The wind blows out of the gates of the day, 1346
The wind is East, the wind is West, 1323
The woods of Arcady are dead, 1346
The world is too much with us; late and soon,
712
The year's at the spring, 1097
Their sense is with their senses all mixed in,
1322
There is sweet music here that softer falls, 1064
There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier, 1057
There was a roaring in the wind all night, 700
There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream, 710
There's a palace in Florence, the world knows
well, 1111
There's not a joy the world can give like that it
takes away, 775
There's not a nook within this solemn Pass, 718
These market-dames, mid-aged, with lips thin-
drawn, 1336
Think No More, Lad; Laugh, Be Jolly, 1342
This is the Heath of Hampstead, 1317
This world is very odd we see, 1239
THOMPSON, FRANCIS, 1319-21
- THOMSON, JAMES, 1316-18
Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul, 815
Thou hast thy calling to some palace floor, 1243
Thou shalt have one God only; who, 1240
Thou shalt unravished bride of quietness, 841
Though I waste watches framing words to
fetter, 1333
Thus piteously Love closed what he begot: 1322
Thus, usually, when he was asked to sing, 806
Time, 819
'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock, 740
'Tis time this heart should be unmoved, 810
To — (Shelley), 830
To a Skylark, (Wordsworth), 708
To a Skylark, (Shelley), 817
To a Young Lady who sent Me a Laurel Crown,
845
To an Athlete Dying Young, 1341
To Autumn, 843
To George Sand, 1244
To Life, 1335
To Marguerite, 1180
To My Brothers, 832
To Night, 819
To Sleep, 845
To the Cuckoo, 700
To the Daisy, 703
To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who
spoke, 771
To Thomas Moore, 797
To Toussaint L'Ouverture, 703
To Walt Whitman in America, 1282-84
To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain, 1242
Toccata of Galuppi's, A, 1105
Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men! 703
Frosachs, The, 718
Troy Town, 1260
True genius, but true woman! dost deny, 1244
'Twas after dread Pultowa's day, 797
Two Sonnets on Fame, 844
Two souls diverse out of our human sight, 1284
- Ulysses*, 1071
Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-
sward, 1329
Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years, 819
Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart! 1243
Unto This Last (essays from) 1152-59
Up at a Villa — Down in the City, 1104
Up! up! my friend, and quit your books, 686
Up with me! up with me into the clouds! 708
Upon a poet's page I wrote, 1333
Upon a time, before the faery broods, 845
- Vain Virtues*, 1262
Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity! 1101
Verse, a breeze amid blossoms straying, 749
Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream, 828
VILLON, FRANÇOIS (translation from), 1259
Vision in a Dream, A (Or, Kubla Khan), 730
Vision of Sudden Death, The, 931-39
Voice, The, 1346
- Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land
and sea, 1094

- Wake! For the Sun who scattered into flight,
 1248
 We cannot kindle when we will, 1173
 We watched her breathing thro' the night,
 871
 We were apart; yet, day by day, 1180
 Weary of myself, and sick of asking, 1172
 Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made,<
 747
 We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
 1339
 What are you doing now, 797
 What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
 1262
 What will it please you, my darling, hereafter to
 be? 1285
 Whate'er you dream with doubt possessed,
 1242
 Wheer 'asta heän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere
 aloän? 1090
 When do I see thee most, beloved one? 1261
 When Earth's last picture is painted, and the
 tubes are twisted and dried, 1341
When I Came Last to Ludlow, 1342
When I Have Borne in Memory, 704
 When I have borne in memory what has tamed,
 704
 When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
 1243
 When the hounds of spring are on winter's
 traces, 1274
 When the lamp is shattered, 830
 When vain desire at last and vain regret, 1263
When We Two Parted, 774
When You Are Old, 1346
 When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
 1346
 Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,
 1103
White in the Moon the Long Road Lies, 1342
 Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he, 709
 Who, then, was Cestius, 1334
 "Why did you melt your waxen man," 1256
 "Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?" 770
 "Why, William, on that old gray stone," 686
Wife Waits, A, 1336
 Will's at the dance in the Club-room below,
 1336
 With fingers weary and worn, 870
 With little here to do or see, 703
 "With sacrifice before the rising morn," 714
Woodstock (song from), 772
Wordsworth, Essay on, 1206-15
 WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM, 684-729
Work Without Hope, 749
World is Too Much with Us, The, 712
Written in London, 1802, 703
 YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER, 1345-46
 You may talk o' gin an' beer, 1340
 Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, 1261
Youth and Age, 749

